

THE
WORKS

OF

Jonathan Swift, D. D.

Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin.

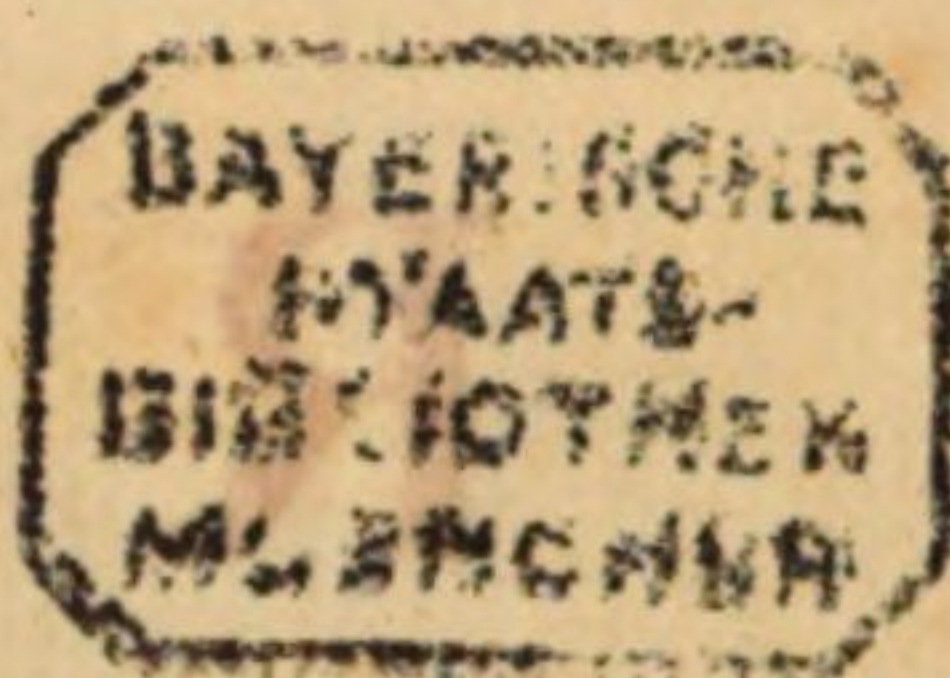
VOLUME II. PART I.

LONDON,

Printed for C. BATHURST, in Fleetstreet.

MDCCLV.

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C O N T E N T S

Of VOL. II. PART I.

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By Dr. Swift.

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* This is the only piece in this volume which was not written by Dr. Swift.

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BIBLIOTHECA
REGIA
MONACENSIS.

PREFACE.

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THE Papers that compose the first of these volumes were printed about eighteen years ago, to which there are now added two or three small tracts; and the verses are transferred into the fourth volume apart, with the addition of such others as we since have written. The second and third will consist of several small treatises in prose, in which a friend or two is concerned with us.

Having both of us been extremely ill treated by some booksellers, especially one *Edmund Curll*, it was our opinion that the best method we could take for justifying ourselves, would be to publish whatever loose papers, in prose and verse, we have formerly written; not only such as have already stolen into the world (very much to our regret, and perhaps very little to our credit) but such, as in any probability hereafter may run the same fate; having been obtained from us by the importunity, and divulged by the indiscretion of friends, although restrained by promises, which few of them are ever known to observe, and often think they make us a compliment in breaking.

But the consequences have been still worse: We have been entitled, and have had our names prefixed at length, to whole volumes of mean productions, equally offensive to good manners and good sense, which we never saw nor heard of till they appeared in print.

For a *forgery* in setting a false name to a writing, which may prejudice another's fortune, the law punishes the offender with the loss of his *ears*; but has inflicted no adequate penalty for such, as prejudice another's reputation in doing the same thing in print; though all and every individual book, so sold under a false name, are manifestly so many several and multiplied forgeries.

Indeed we hoped, that the good nature, or at least the good judgment of the world, would have cleared us from the imputation of such things, as had been thus charged upon us by the malice of enemies, the want of judgment in friends, the unconcern of indifferent persons, and the confident assertions of booksellers.

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We are ashamed to find so ill a taste prevail, as to make it a necessary work to do this justice to ourselves. It is very possible for any author to write below himself; either his subject not proving so fruitful, or fitted for him, as he at first imagined; or his health, or his humour, or the present disposition of his mind, unqualifying him at that juncture: however, if he possessed any distinguishing marks of style, or peculiarity of thinking, there would remain in his least successful writings some few tokens, whereby persons of taste might discover him.

But since it hath otherwise fallen out, we think we have sufficiently paid for our want of prudence, and determine for the future to be less communicative: or rather, having done with such amusements, we are resolved to give up what we cannot fairly disown, to the severity of criticks, the malice of personal enemies, and the indulgence of friends.

We are sorry for the satire interspersed in some of these pieces upon a few people, from whom the highest provocations have been received, and who by their conduct since have shewn, that they have not yet forgiven us the wrong they did. It is a very unlucky circumstance, to be obliged to retaliate the injuries of such authors, whose works are so soon forgotten, that we are in danger already of appearing the first aggressors. It is to be lamented, that *Virgil* let pass a line, which told posterity he had two enemies called *Bavius* and *Mævius*. The wisest way is not once to name them, but (as the madman advised the gentleman, who told him he wore a sword to kill his enemies) *to let them alone and they will die of themselves*. And according to this rule we have acted throughout all those writings, which we designed for the press: but in these, the publication whereof was not owing to our folly, but that of others, the omission of the names was not in our power. At the worst, we can only give them that liberty now for something, which they have so many years exercised for nothing, of railing and scribbling against us. And it is some commendation, that we have not done it all this while,

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while, but avoided publickly to characterize any person without long experience. *Nonum prematur in annum* is a good rule for all writers, but chiefly for writers of characters; because it may happen to those, who vent praise or censure too precipitately, as it did to an eminent *English* poet, who celebrated a young nobleman for erecting *Dryden's* monument upon a promise, which his lordship forgot, till it was done by another.

In regard to two persons only we wish our raillery, though ever so tender, or resentment, though ever so just, had not been indulged. We speak of Sir *John Vanbrugh*, who was a man of wit, and of honour; and of Mr. *Addison*, whose name deserves all respect from every lover of learning.

We cannot deny (and perhaps most writers of our kind have been in the same circumstances) that in several parts of our lives, and according to the dispositions we were in, we have written some things, which we may wish never to have thought on. Some sallies of levity ought to be imputed to youth, (supposed in charity, as it was in truth, to be the time in which we wrote them;) others to the gaiety of our minds at certain junctures common to all men. The publishing of these, which we cannot disown, and without our consent, is, I think, a greater injury, than that of ascribing to us the most stupid productions, which we can wholly deny. This has been usually practised in other countries after a man's decease; which in a great measure accounts for that manifest *inequality* found in the works of the best authors; the collectors only considering, that so many more sheets raise the price of the book; and the greater fame a writer is in possession of, the more of such trash he may bear to have tacked to him. Thus it is apparently the editor's interest to insert, what the author's judgment had rejected; and care is always taken to intersperse these additions in such a manner, that scarce any book of consequence can be bought, without purchasing something unworthy of the author along with it.

But in our own country it is still worse: Those very booksellers,

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who have supported themselves upon an author's fame while he lived; have done their utmost after his death to lessen it by such practices: even a man's last *will* is not secure from being exposed in print; whereby his most particular regards, and even his dying tenderneſſes are laid open. It has been humorouſly ſaid, that ſome have fiſhed the very jakes for papers left there by men of wit: but it is no jeſt to affirm, that the cabinets of the ſick, and the cloſets of the dead, have been broke open and ranſacked to publiſh our *private letters*, and divulge to all mankind the moſt ſecret ſentiments and inter-
course of friendſhip. Nay, theſe fellows are arrived to that height of impudence, that when an author has publickly diſowned a ſpurious piece, they have diſputed his own name with him in printed advertiſements; which has been practiſed to Mr. *Congreve* and Mr. *Prior*.

We are therefore compelled, in reſpect to truth, to ſubmit to a very great hardſhip; to own ſuch pieces, as in our ſtricter judgments we would have ſuppreſſed for ever: We are obliged to confeſs, that this whole collection, in a manner, conſiſts of what we not only thought unlikely to reach the future, but unworthy even of the *preſent* age; not our ſtudies, but our follies; not our works, but our idleneſſes.

Some comfort however it is, that all of them are innocent, and moſt of them, ſlight as they are, had yet a moral tendency; either to ſoften the virulence of parties againſt each other; or to laugh out of countenance ſome vice or folly of the time; or to diſcredit the impoſitions of quacks and falſe pretenders to ſcience; or to humble the arrogance of the ill-natured and envious; in a word, to leſſen the *vanity*, and promote the *good humour* of mankind.

Such as they are, we muſt in truth confeſs, they are *ours*, and others ſhould in juſtice believe, they are *all* that are *ours*. If any thing elſe has been printed, in which we really had any hand, it is either intolerably imperfect, or loaded with ſpurious additions; ſometimes even with inſertions of mens names, which we never
meant,

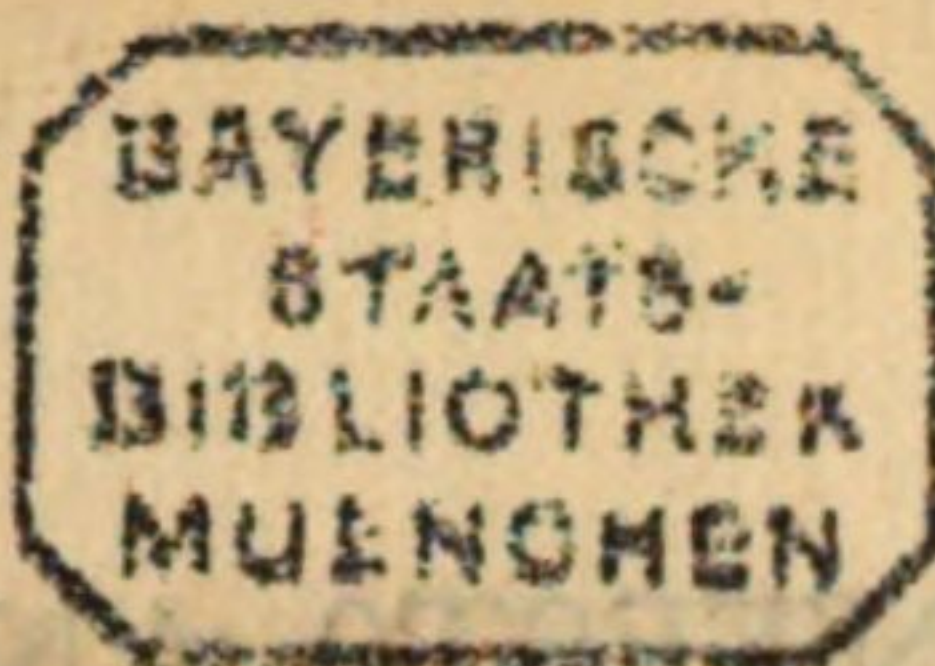
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meant, and for whom we have an esteem and respect. Even those pieces, in which we are least injured, have never before been printed from the true copies, or with any tolerable degree of correctness. We declare, that this collection contains every piece, which in the idlest humour we have written ; not only such, as came under our review or correction ; but many others, which however unfinished, are not now in our power to suppress. Whatsoever was in our own possession at the publishing hereof, or of which no copy was gone abroad, we have actually destroyed, to prevent all possibility of the like treatment. These volumes likewise will contain all the papers, wherein we have casually had any share ; particularly those written in conjunction with our friends, Dr. *Arbutnot* and Mr. *Gay* ; and lastly, all of this sort composed singly by either of those hands. The reader is therefore desired to do the same justice to these our friends, as to us ; and to be assured that all the *things*, called our *miscellanies* (except the works of *Alexander Pope*, published by *B. Lintot*, in *quarto*, and *folio* in 1717 ; those of Mr. *Gay* by *J. Tonson*, in *quarto*, in 1720 ; and as many of these *miscellanies* as have been formerly printed by *Benj. Tooke*) are absolutely spurious, and without our consent imposed upon the publick.

Twickenham,
May 27, 1727,

JONATH. SWIFT
ALEX. POPE

A D I S-



DISCOURSE
OF THE
CONTESTS and DISSENTIONS
BETWEEN THE
NOBLES and the COMMONS
IN
ATHENS and ROME;

With the Consequences they had upon both those STATES.

— *Si tibi vera videtur,
Dede manus, & si falsa est, accingere contra.*

LUCR.

Written in the Year 1701.

CHAP. I.

IT is agreed, that in all government there is an absolute unlimited power, which naturally and originally seems to be placed in the whole body, where-ever the executive part of it lies. This holds in the body natural; for where-ever we place the beginning of motion,

THE following discourse is a kind of remon-
france in behalf of king *William* and his friends,
against the proceedings of the house of commons;
and was published during the recess of parliament
in the summer of 1701, with a view to engage
them in milder measures when they should meet
again.

At this time *Lewis XIV.* was making large
strides towards universal monarchy; plots were
carrying on at *St. Germain's*; the *Dutch* had ac-
knowledged the duke of *Anjou* as king of *Spain*,
and king *William* was made extremely uneasy by
the violence with which many of his ministers and
chief favourites were pursued by the commons;
the

tion, whether from the head, or the heart, or the animal spirits in general, the body moves and acts by a consent of all its parts. This unlimited power, placed fundamentally in the body of a people, is what the best legislators of all ages have endeavoured, in their several schemes or institutions of government, to deposite in such hands as would preserve the people from rapine and oppression within, as well as violence from without. Most of them seem to agree in this, that it was a trust too great to be committed to any one man or assembly, and therefore they left the right still in the whole body; but the administration or executive part in the hands of *one*, the *few*, or the *many*, into which three powers all independent bodies of men seem naturally to divide; for by all I have read of those innumerable and petty commonwealths in *Italy*, *Greece*, and *Sicily*, as well as the great ones of *Carthage* and *Rome*, it seems to me, that a free people met together, whether by *compact*, or *family-government*, as soon as they fall into any acts of civil society, do of themselves divide into three powers. The first is that of some one eminent spirit, who, having signalized his valour and fortune in defence of his country, or by the practice of popular arts at home, comes to have great influence on the people, to grow their leader in warlike expeditions, and to preside, after a sort, in their civil assemblies; and this is grounded upon the principles of nature and common reason, which in all difficulties and dangers, where prudence or courage is required, do rather incite us to fly for counsel or assistance to a single person, than a multitude. The second natural division of power is of such men, who have acquired large possessions, and

the king, to appease their resentment, had made several changes in his ministry, and removed some of his most faithful servants from places of the highest trust and dignity: this expedient, however, had proved ineffectual, and the commons persisted in their opposition; they began by impeaching *William Bentinck*, earl of *Portland*, groom of the stole; and proceeded to the impeachment of *John Somers*, baron *Somers* of *Evesham*, first lord-keeper, afterwards lord chancellor; *Edward Russel*, earl of

Orford, lord treasurer of the navy, and one of the lords commissioners of the admiralty; and *Charles Mountague*, earl of *Halifax*, one of the commissioners of the treasury, and afterwards chancellor of the exchequer. Its general purport is to damp the warmth of the commons by shewing, that the measures they pursued had a direct tendency to bring on the tyranny, which they professed to oppose; and the particular cases of the impeached lords are paralleled in *Athenian* characters.

confe-

consequently dependancies, or descend from ancestors who have left them great inheritances, together with an hereditary authority. These easily uniting in thoughts and opinions, and acting in concert, begin to enter upon measures for securing their properties, which are best upheld by preparing against invasions from abroad, and maintaining peace at home ; this commences a great council or senate of nobles for the weighty affairs of the nation. The last division is of the mass or body of the people, whose part of power is great and indisputable, whenever they can unite either collectively or by deputation, to exert it. Now the three forms of government, so generally known in the schools, differ only by the civil administration being placed in the hands of one, or sometimes two, (as in *Sparta*) who were called *kings* ; or in a senate, who were called the *nobles* ; or in the people collective or representative, who may be called the *commons*. Each of these had frequently the executive power in *Greece*, and sometimes in *Rome* : but the power in the last resort was always meant by legislators to be held in balance among all three. And it will be an eternal rule in politicks among every free people, that there is a balance of power to be carefully held by every state within itself, as well as among several states with each other.

The true meaning of a balance of power, either without or within a state, is best conceived by considering, what the nature of a balance is. It supposes three things : first, the part which is held, together with the hand that holds it ; and then the two scales, with whatever is weighed therein. Now consider several states in a neighbourhood ; in order to preserve peace between these states, it is necessary they should be formed into a balance, whereof one or more are to be directors, who are to divide the rest into equal scales, and upon occasion remove from one into the other, or else fall with their own weight into the lightest ; so in a state within itself, the balance must be held by a third hand, who is to deal the remaining power with the utmost exactness into each scale. Now it is not necessary,

fary, that the power should be equally divided between these three ; for the balance may be held by the weakest, who, by his address and conduct, removing from either scale, and adding of his own, may keep the scales duly poised. Such was that of the two kings of *Sparta*, the consular power in *Rome*, that of the kings of *Media* before the reign of *Cyrus*, as represented by *Xenophon* ; and that of the several limited states in the *Gothick* Institution.

When the balance is broken, whether by the negligence, folly, or weakness of the hand that held it, or by mighty weights fallen into either scale, the power will never continue long in equal division between the two remaining parties, but, till the balance is fixed anew, will run entirely into one. This gives the truest account of what is understood in the most antient and approved *Greek* authors by the word *Tyranny*, which is not meant for the seizing of the uncontrolled or absolute power into the hands of a single person, (as many superficial men have grossly mistaken,) but for the breaking of the balance by whatever hand, and leaving the power wholly in one scale : For *tyranny* and *usurpation* in a state are by no means confined to any number, as might easily appear from examples enough ; and because the point is material, I shall cite a few to prove it.

The * *Romans* having sent to *Athens*, and the *Greek* cities of *Italy*, for the copies of the best laws, chose ten legislators to put them into form, and during the exercise of their office, suspended the consular power, leaving the administration of affairs in their hands. These very men, though chosen for such a work, as the digesting a body of laws for the government of a free state, did immediately usurp arbitrary power ; ran into all the forms of it, had their guards and spies after the practice of the tyrants of those ages, affected kingly state, destroyed the nobles, and oppressed the people ; one of them proceeding so far, as to endeavour to force a lady of great virtue : the very crime, which gave occasion to the

* *Dionys. Hal. lib. 10.*

expulsion of the regal power but sixty years before, as this attempt did to that of the *Decemviri*.

The *Ephori* in *Sparta* were at first only certain persons deputed by the kings to judge in civil matters, while *they* were employed in the wars. These men at several times usurped the absolute authority, and were as cruel tyrants, as any in their age.

Soon * after the unfortunate expedition into *Sicily*, the *Athenians* chose four hundred men for administration of affairs, who became a body of tyrants, and were called, in the language of those ages, an *oligarchy*, or tyranny of the *few*; under which hateful denomination they were soon after deposed in great rage by the people.

When † *Athens* was subdued by *Lyfander*, he appointed thirty men for the administration of that city, who immediately fell into the rankest tyranny: but this was not all; for conceiving their power not founded on a *basis* large enough, they admitted three thousand into a share of the government; and thus fortified, became the cruellest tyranny upon record. They murdered in cold blood great numbers of the best men, without any provocation, from the meer lust of cruelty, like *Nero* or *Caligula*. This was such a number of tyrants together, as amounted to near a third part of the whole city; for ‡ *Xenophon* tells us, that the city contained about ten thousand houses; and allowing one man to every house, who could have any share in the government, (the rest consisting of women, children, and servants) and making other obvious abatements, these tyrants, if they had been careful to adhere together, might have been a majority even of the people collective.

In || the time of the second *Punick* war, the balance of power in *Carthage* was got on the side of the people, and this to a degree, that some authors reckon the government to have been then

* Thucyd. lib. 8.
Frag. lib. 6.

† Xenoph. de Rebus Græc. l. 2.

‡ Memorab. lib. 3.

|| Polyb.

among them a *dominatio plebis*, or *tyranny of the commons*; which it seems they were at all times apt to fall into, and was at last among the causes, that ruined their state: and the frequent murders of their generals, which † *Diodorus* tells us was grown to an established custom among them, may be another instance, that tyranny is not confined to numbers.

I shall mention but one example more among a great number, that might be produced; || it is related by the author last cited. The orators of the people at *Argos* (whether you will style them in modern phrase, *great speakers of the house*; or only, in general, representatives of the people collective) stirred up the commons against the nobles, of whom 1600 were murdered at once; and at last, the orators themselves, because they left off their accusations, or, to speak intelligibly, because they *withdrew their impeachments*; having, it seems, raised a spirit they were not able to lay. And this last circumstance, as cases have lately stood, may perhaps be worth noting.

From what hath been already advanced, several conclusions may be drawn:

First, That a mixed government partaking of the known forms received in the schools is by no means of *Gothick* invention, but hath place in nature and reason, seems very well to agree with the sentiments of most legislators, and to have been followed in most states, whether they have appeared under the name of monarchies, aristocracies, or democracies: for not to mention the several republicks of this composition in *Gaul* and *Germany*, described by *Cæsar* and *Tacitus*, *Polybius* tells us, the best government is that, which consists of three forms, * *regno, optimatum, & populi imperio*; which may be fairly translated, the *king, lords, and commons*. Such was that of *Sparta*, in its primitive institution by *Lycurgus*; who, observing the corruptions and depravations to which

† Lib. 20.

|| Lib. 15.

* Fragn. lib. 6.

every of these was subject, compounded his scheme out of all ; so that it was made up of *reges*, *seniores*, & *populus*. Such also was the state of *Rome* under its consuls : and the author tells us, that the *Romans* fell upon this model purely by chance, (which I take to have been nature and common reason) but the *Spartans* by thought and design. And such at *Carthage* was the * *summa reipublicæ*, or power in the last resort ; for they had their kings called *suffetes*, and a senate which had the power of *nobles*, and the *people* had a share established too.

Secondly, It will follow, That those reasoners, who employ so much of their zeal, their wit, and their leisure for the upholding the balance of power in Christendom, at the same time that by their practices they are endeavouring to destroy it at home, are not such mighty patriots, or so much in the true interest of their country, as they would affect to be thought ; but seem to be employed like a man, who pulls down with his right hand what he has been building with his left.

Thirdly, This makes appear the error of those, who think it an uncontrollable maxim, that power is always safer lodged in many hands than in one : for if these many hands be made up only from one of the three divisions before mentioned, it is plain from those examples already produced, and easy to be paralleled in other ages and countries, that they are as capable of enslaving the nation, and of acting all manner of tyranny and oppression, as it is possible for a single person to be, though we should suppose their number not only to be of four or five hundred, but above three thousand.

Again, It is manifest from what has been said, that in order to preserve the balance in a mixed state, the limits of power deposited with each party ought to be ascertained, and generally known. The defect of this is the cause, that introduces those strugglings

* Id. ib.

in a state about *prerogative* and *liberty*, about encroachments of the *few* upon the rights of the *many*, and of the *many* upon the privileges of the *few*, which ever did, and ever will conclude in a tyranny; first either of the *few*, or the *many*, but at last infallibly of a single person: for, whichever of the three divisions in a state is upon the scramble for more power than its own, (as one or other of them generally is) unless due care be taken by the other two, upon every new question that arises, they will be sure to decide in favour of themselves, talk much of inherent right; they will nourish up a dormant power, and reserve privileges *in petto*, to exert upon occasions, to serve expedients, and to urge upon necessities; they will make large demands, and scanty concessions, ever coming off considerable gainers: thus at length the balance is broke, and tyranny let in; from which door of the three it matters not.

To pretend to a *declarative* right upon any occasion whatsoever, is little less than to make use of the whole power; that is, to declare an opinion to be law, which has always been contested, or perhaps never started at all before such an incident brought it on the stage. Not to consent to the enacting of such a law, which has no view besides the general good, unless another law shall at the same time pass, with no other view but that of advancing the power of one party alone; what is this but to claim a positive voice, as well as a negative? * To pretend that great changes and alienations of property have created new and great dependencies, and consequently new additions of power, as some reasoners have done, is a most dangerous tenet. If dominion must follow property, let it follow in the same pace; for change in property through the bulk of a nation makes slow marches, and its due

* This seems to allude to a practice of the house of commons called *Tacking*: when they suspected that a favourite bill would be rejected, they tacked it to a money-bill; and as it was not possible to proceed without the supply, and as it became necessary to reject or receive both the bills thus tacked together, this expedient perfectly answered its purpose.

power always attends it. To conclude, that whatever attempt is begun by an assembly, ought to be pursued to the end, without regard to the greatest incidents that may happen to alter the case: to count it mean, and below the *dignity of a house*, to quit a prosecution; to resolve upon a conclusion before it is possible to be apprised of the premises: to act thus, I say, is to affect not only absolute power, but infallibility too. Yet such unaccountable proceedings as these have popular assemblies engaged in, for want of fixing the due limits of *power* and *privilege*.

Great changes may indeed be made in a government, yet the form continue, and the balance be held: but large intervals of time must pass between every such innovation, enough to melt down and make it of a piece with the constitution. Such, we are told, were the proceedings of *Solon*, when he modelled anew the *Athenian* commonwealth; and what convulsions in our own, as well as other states, have been bred by a neglect of this rule, is fresh and notorious enough: it is too soon in all conscience to repeat this error again.

Having shewn, that there is a natural balance of power in all free states, and how it hath been divided, sometimes by the people themselves, as in *Rome*, at others by the institutions of the legislators, as in the several states of *Greece* and *Sicily*; the next thing is to examine, what methods have been taken to break or overthrow this balance, which every one of the three parties hath continually endeavoured, as opportunities have served; as might appear from the stories of most ages and countries: for absolute power in a particular state, is of the same nature with universal monarchy in several states adjoining to each other. So endless and exorbitant are the desires of men, whether considered in their persons or their states, that they will grasp at all, and can form no scheme of perfect happiness with less. Ever since men have been united into governments, the hopes and endeavours after universal monarchy have been bandied among them, from the
reign

reign of *Ninus* to this of the *most christian king*; in which pursuits commonwealths have had their share as well as monarchs: so the *Athenians*, the *Spartans*, the *Thebans*, and the *Achaians*, did several times aim at the universal monarchy of *Greece*: so the commonwealths of *Carthage* and *Rome* affected the universal monarchy of the then known world. In like manner hath absolute power been pursued by the several parties of each particular state; wherein single persons have met with most success; though the endeavours of the *few* and the *many* have been frequent enough, yet, being neither so uniform in their designs, nor so direct in their views, they neither could manage nor maintain the power they had got; but were ever deceived by the popularity and ambition of some single person. So that it will be always a wrong step in policy, for the *nobles* or *commons* to carry their endeavours after power so far, as to overthrow the balance; and it would be enough to damp their warmth in such pursuits, if they could once reflect, that in such a course they will be sure to run upon the very rock, that they meant to avoid; which, I suppose they would have us think, is the tyranny of a single person.

Many examples might be produced of the endeavours of each of these three rivals after absolute power; but I shall suit my discourse to the time I am writing in, and relate only such dissensions in *Greece* and *Rome*, between the *nobles* and *commons*, with the consequences of them, wherein the latter were the aggressors.

I shall begin with *Greece*, where my observations shall be confined to *Athens*, though several instances might be brought from other states thereof.

C H A P. II.

Of the dissensions in ATHENS, between the few and the many.

THESEUS is the first, who is recorded with any appearance of truth to have brought the *Grecians* from a barbarous manner

ner of life, among scattered villages, into cities; and to have established the *popular state* in *Athens*, assigning to himself the guardianship of the laws and chief command in war. He was forced after some time to leave the *Athenians* to their own measures upon account of their seditious temper, which ever continued with them, till the final dissolution of their government by the *Romans*. It seems, the country about *Attica* was the most barren of any in *Greece*; through which means it happened, that the natives were never expelled by the fury of invaders, (who thought it not worth a conquest) but continued always *Aborigines*; and therefore retained through all revolutions a tincture of that turbulent spirit, wherewith their government began. This institution of *Theseus* appears to have been rather a sort of mixed monarchy, than a popular state, and for aught we know, might continue so during the series of kings till the death of *Codrus*. From this last prince *Solon* was said to be descended; who, finding the people engaged in two violent factions of the poor and the rich, and in great confusion thereupon; refusing the monarchy, which was offered him, chose rather to cast the government after another model, wherein he made due provisions for settling the balance of power, chusing a senate of four hundred, and disposing the magistracies and offices according to men's estates; leaving to the multitude their votes in electing, and the power of judging certain processes by appeal. This council of four hundred was chosen, one hundred out of each tribe, and seems to have been a body representative of the people: though the people collective reserved a share of power to themselves. It is a point of history perplexed enough; but thus much is certain, that the balance of power was provided for; else *Pisistratus*, called by authors the tyrant of *Athens*, could never have governed so peaceably, as he did, * without changing any of *Solon's* laws. These several pow-

* Herodot. lib. 1.

ers, together with that of the *archon* or chief magistrate, made up the form of government in *Athens*, at what time it began to appear upon the scene of action and story.

The first great man bred up under this institution was *Miltiades*, who lived about ninety years after *Solon*, and is reckoned to have been the first great captain, not only of *Athens*, but of all *Greece*. From the time of *Miltiades* to that of *Phocion*, who is looked upon as the last famous general of *Athens*, are about 130 years : after which they were subdued and insulted by *Alexander's* captains, and continued under several revolutions a small truckling state, of no name or reputation, till they fell with the rest of *Greece* under the power of the *Romans*.

During this period from *Miltiades* to *Phocion*, I shall trace the conduct of the *Athenians* with relation to their dissensions between the people and some of their generals; who at that time, by their power and credit in the army, in a warlike commonwealth, and often supported by each other, were with the magistrates and other civil officers a sort of counterpoise to the power of the people, who since the death of *Solon* had already made great encroachments. What these dissensions were, how founded, and what the consequences of them, I shall briefly and impartially relate.

I must here premise, that the *nobles* in *Athens* were not at this time a corporate assembly, that I can gather; therefore the resentments of the Commons were usually turned against particular persons, and by way of articles of impeachment. Whereas the commons in *Rome*, and some other states, as will appear in a proper place, though they followed this method upon occasion, yet generally pursued the enlargement of their power by more set quarrels of one entire assembly against another. However, the custom of particular impeachments being not limited to former ages, any more than that of general struggles and dissensions between fixed assemblies of nobles and commons, and the ruin of *Greece* having been owing to the former, as that of *Rome* was to the latter, I shall treat

treat on both expressly ; that those states who are concerned in either (if at least there be any such now in the world) may, by observing the means and issues of former dissensions, learn whether the causes are alike in theirs ; and if they find them to be so, may consider whether they ought not justly to apprehend the same effects.

To speak of every particular person impeached by the Commons of *Athens* within the compass designed, would introduce the history of almost every great man they had among them : I shall therefore take notice only of six, who living in that period of time when *Athens* was at the height of its glory, as indeed it could not be otherwise while such hands were at the helm, though *impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors*, such as *bribery, arbitrary proceedings, misapplying or embezzling publick funds, ill conduct at sea*, and the like, were honoured and lamented by their country, as the preservers of it, and have had the veneration of all ages since paid justly to their memories.

Miltiades was one of the *Athenian* generals against the *Persian* power, and the famous victory at *Marathon* was chiefly owing to his valour and conduct. Being sent some time after to reduce the island *Paros*, he mistook a great fire at a distance for the fleet, and being no ways a match for them, set sail for *Athens* ; at his arrival he was *impeached* by the commons for treachery, though not able to appear by reason of his wounds, fined 30000 crowns, and died in prison. Though the consequences of this proceeding upon the affairs of *Athens* were no other than the untimely loss of so great and good a man, yet I could not forbear relating it.

Their next great man was *Aristides* †. Besides the mighty service he had done his country in the wars, he was a person of the strictest justice, and best acquainted with the laws as well as forms of their government, so that he was in a manner *chancel-*

† Lord Somers. He was the general patron of the *literati*.

ORRERY.

lor of Athens. This man, upon a flight and false accusation of favouring arbitrary power, was banished by *ostracism*; which rendered into modern *English* would signify, that they voted *he should be removed from their presence and council for ever*. But however, they had the wit to recall him, and to that action owed the preservation of their state by his future services. For it must be still confessed in behalf of the *Athenian* people, that they never conceived themselves perfectly infallible, nor arrived to the heights of *modern assemblies*, to make *obstinacy* confirm what *sudden heat* and *temerity* began. They thought it not below the dignity of an assembly to endeavour at correcting an ill step; at least to repent, though it often fell out too late.

Themistocles ‡ was at first a *commoner* himself: it was he, that raised the *Athenians* to their greatness at sea, which he thought to be the true and constant interest of that commonwealth; and the famous naval victory over the *Persians* at *Salamais* was owing to his conduct. It seems the people observed somewhat of haughtiness in his temper and behaviour, and therefore banished him for five years; but finding some slight matter of accusation against him, they sent to seize his person, and he hardly escaped to the *Persian* court; from whence, if the love of his country had not surmounted its base ingratitude to him, he had many invitations to return at the head of the *Persian* fleet, and take a terrible revenge: but he rather chose a voluntary death.

The people of *Athens* impeached *Pericles* † for *misapplying the*

‡ Earl of Orford. He had been considered in a manner as lord high admiral, the whole affairs of the navy having been committed to his charge.

ORRERY.

† Lord Halifax. He had a fine genius for poetry, and had employed his more youthful part of life in that science. He was distinguished by the name of *Mouse Mountague*, having ridiculed, jointly with Mat. Prior, Mr. Dryden's fa-

mous poem of the Hind and Panther; the parody is drawn from Horace's fable of the city mouse and country mouse: but afterwards, upon Mr. Mountague's promotion to the chancellorship of the exchequer, Prior, with a good-humoured indignation at seeing his friend preferred and himself neglected, concludes an epistle written in the year 1698, to Fleetwood Shepherd, Esq; with these three lines:

My friend *Charles Mountague's* preferr'd,
Nor would I have it long observ'd
That one *mouse* eats while *r'other's* starv'd.

ORRERY.

publick

publick revenues to his own private use. He had been a person of great deservings from the republick, was an *admirable speaker*, and very popular. *His accounts were confused, and he could not then give them up,* therefore merely to divert that difficulty, and the consequences of it, he was forced to engage his country in the *Peloponnesian* war, the longest that ever was known in *Greece*, and which ended in the utter ruin of *Athens*.

The same people having resolved to subdue *Sicily*, sent a mighty fleet under the command of *Nicias*, *Lyfimachus*, and *Alcibiades*; the two former persons of age and experience; the last a young man of noble birth, excellent education, and a plentiful fortune. A little before the fleet set sail, it seems one night the stone-images of *Mercury*, placed in several parts of the city, were all pared in the face: this action the *Athenians* interpreted for a design of destroying the popular state; and *Alcibiades*, having been formerly noted for the like frolicks and excursions, was immediately accused of this. He, whether conscious of his innocence, or assured of the secrecy, offered to come to his tryal before he went to his command; this the *Athenians* refused. But as soon as he was got to *Sicily*, they sent for him back, designing to take the advantage, and prosecute him in the absence of his friends, and of the army, where he was very powerful. It seems, he understood the resentments of a popular assembly too well to trust them; and therefore, instead of returning, escaped to *Sparta*; where his desires of revenge prevailing over his love to his country, he became its greatest enemy. Mean while the *Athenians* before *Sicily*, by the death of one commander, and the superstition, weakness, and perfect ill conduct of the other, were utterly destroyed, the whole fleet taken, and a miserable slaughter made of the army, whereof hardly one ever returned. Some time after this *Alcibiades* was recalled upon his own conditions by the necessities of the people, and made chief commander at sea and land; but his lieutenant engaging against his positive orders, and being beaten by *Lyfander*,

der, *Alcibiades* was again disgraced, and banished. However, the *Athenians* having lost all strength and heart since their misfortune at *Sicily*, and now deprived of the only person that was able to recover their losses, repent of their rashness, and endeavour in vain for his restoration; the *Persian* lieutenant, to whose protection he fled, making him a sacrifice to the resentments of *Lyfander* the general of the *Lacedemonians*, who now reduces all the dominions of the *Athenians*, takes the city, razes their walls, ruins their works, and changes the form of their government; which though again restored for some time by *Thrafsybulus* (as their walls were rebuilt by *Conon*) yet here we must date the fall of the *Athenian* greatness; the dominion and chief power in *Greece* from that period to the time of *Alexander the Great*, which was about fifty years, being divided between the *Spartans* and *Thebans*. Though *Philip*, *Alexander's* father (*the most christian king* of that age) had indeed some time before begun to break in upon the republicks of *Greece* by conquest or bribery; particularly dealing large money among some popular orators, by which he brought many of them, as the term of art was then, to *Philippize*.

In the time of *Alexander* and his captains, the *Athenians* were offered an opportunity of recovering their liberty, and being restored to their former state; but the wise turn they thought to give the matter, was by an impeachment and sacrifice of the author, to hinder the success. For, after the destruction of *Thebes* by *Alexander*, this prince designing the conquest of *Athens* was prevented by ‡ *Phocion* the *Athenian* general, then ambassador from that state; who by his great wisdom and skill at negotiations diverted *Alexander* from his design, and restored the *Athenians* to his favour. The very same success he had with *Antipater* after *Alexander's* death, at which time the government was new regulated by *Solon's* laws: but *Polyperchon*, in hatred to *Phocion*, hav-

‡ The earl of Portland. ORRERY.

ing by order of the young king, whose governor he was, restored those whom *Phocion* had banished, the plot succeeded. *Phocion* was accused by popular orators, and put to death.

Thus was the most powerful commonwealth of all *Greece*, after great degeneracies from the institution of *Solon*, utterly destroyed by that rash, jealous, and inconstant humour of the people, which was never satisfied to see a general either *victorious* or *unfortunate*; such ill judges, as well as rewarders, have *popular assemblies* been, of those who best deserved from them.

Now the circumstance, which makes these examples of more importance, is, that this very power of the people in *Athens*, claimed so confidently for an *inherent right*, and insisted on as the *undoubted privilege of an Athenian born*, was the rankest encroachment imaginable, and the grossest degeneracy from the form that *Solon* left them. In short, their government was grown into a *dominatio plebis*, or *tyranny of the people*, who by degrees had broke and overthrown the balance, which that legislator had very well fixed and provided for. This appears not only from what has been already said of that lawgiver, but more manifestly from a passage in *Diodorus*; who tells us, † *That Antipater, one of Alexander's captains, abrogated the popular government (in Athens) and restored the power of suffrages and magistracy to such only, as were worth two thousand drachmas; by which means, says he, that republick came to be [again] administered by the laws of Solon.* By this quotation it is manifest that great author looked upon *Solon's* institution, and a popular government, to be two different things. And as for this restoration by *Antipater*, it had neither consequence nor continuance worth observing.

I might easily produce many more examples, but these are sufficient: and it may be worth the readers time to reflect a little on the merits of the cause, as well as of the men, who had been thus

† Lib. 18.

dealt with by their country. I shall direct him no further than by repeating, that *Aristides* was the most renowned by the people themselves for his exact *justice and knowledge in the law*; that *Themistocles* was a most fortunate admiral, and had got a *mighty victory over the great king of Persia's fleet*; that *Pericles* was an *able minister of state, an excellent orator, and a man of letters*: and lastly, that *Phocion*, besides the success of his arms, was also renowned for his *negotiations abroad, having in an embassy brought the greatest monarch of the world at that time to the terms of an honourable peace, by which his country was preserved*.

I shall conclude my remarks upon *Athens* with the character given us of that people by *Polybius*. *About this time, says he, the Athenians were governed by two men; quite sunk in their affairs; had little or no commerce with the rest of Greece, and were become great reverencers of crowned heads*.

For, from the time of *Alexander's* captains till *Greece* was subdued by the *Romans*, to the latter part of which this description of *Polybius* falls in, *Athens* never produced one famous man either for councils or arms, or hardly for learning. And indeed it was a dark insipid period through all *Greece*: for except the *Achaian* league under *Aratus* and *Philopæmen*; and the endeavours of *Agis* and *Cleomenes* to restore the state of *Sparta*, so frequently harrassed by tyrannies occasioned by the popular practices of the *ephor*i, there was very little worth recording. All which consequences may perhaps be justly imputed to this degeneracy of *Athens*.

C H A P. III.

Of the dissensions between the patricians and plebeians in Rome, with the consequences they had upon that state.

HAVING in the foregoing chapter confined myself to the proceedings of the commons only by the method of *impeachments*

ments against particular persons, with the fatal effects they had upon the state of *Athens*, I shall now treat of the dissensions at *Rome* between the people and the collective body of the *patricians* or nobles. It is a large subject, but I shall draw it into as narrow a compass as I can.

As *Greece*, from the most ancient accounts we have of it, was divided into several kingdoms, so was most part of *Italy* † into several petty commonwealths. And as those kings in *Greece* are said to have been deposed by their people upon the score of their arbitrary proceedings, so on the contrary the commonwealths of *Italy* were all swallowed up, and concluded in the tyranny of the *Roman* emperors. However, the differences between those *Grecian* monarchies, and *Italian* republicks, were not very great: for, by the accounts *Homer* gives us of those *Grecian* princes who came to the siege of *Troy*, as well as by several passages in the *Odyssees*, it is manifest, that the power of these princes in their several states was much of a size with that of the kings in *Sparta*, the archon at *Athens*, the suffetes at *Carthage*, and the consuls in *Rome*: so that a limited and divided power seems to have been the most antient and inherent principles of both those people in matters of government. And such did that of *Rome* continue from the time of *Romulus*, though with some interruptions, to *Julius Cæsar*, when it ended in the tyranny of a single person. During which period (not many years longer than from the *Norman* conquest to our age) the commons were growing by degrees into power and property, gaining ground upon the patricians, as it were, inch by inch, till at last they quite overturned the balance, leaving all doors open to the practices of popular and ambitious men, who destroyed the wisest republick, and enslaved the noblest people that ever entered upon the stage of the world. By what

† Dionys. Halicar.

steps and degrees this was brought to pass, shall be the subject of my present enquiry.

While *Rome* was governed by kings, the monarchy was altogether elective. *Romulus* himself, when he had built the city, was declared king by the universal consent of the people, and by augury, which was there understood for *divine appointment*. Among other divisions he made of the people, one was into *patricians* and *plebeians*: the former were like the barons of *England* some time after the conquest; and the latter are also described to be almost exactly what our commons were then. For they were dependants upon the patricians, whom they chose for their patrons and protectors, to answer for their appearance, and defend them in any process: they also supplied their patrons with money in exchange for their protection. This custom of *patronage*, it seems, was very antient, and long practised among the *Greeks*.

Out of these patricians *Romulus* chose an hundred to be a *senate*, or *grand council*, for advice and assistance to him in the administration. The senate therefore originally consisted all of *nobles*, and were of themselves a *standing council*, the *people* being only convoked upon such occasions, as by this institution of *Romulus* fell into their cognizance: those were to constitute magistrates, to give their votes for making laws, and to advise upon entering on a war. But the two former of these popular privileges were to be confirmed by authority of the senate; and the last was only permitted at the king's pleasure. This was the utmost extent of power pretended to by the *commons* in the time of *Romulus*; all the rest being divided between the king and the senate; the whole agreeing very nearly with the constitution of *England* for some centuries after the conquest.

After a year's *interregnum* from the death of *Romulus* the senate of their own authority chose a successor, and a stranger, meerly upon the fame of his virtue, without asking the consent of the commons; which custom they likewise observed in the two following

following kings. But in the election of *Tarquinius Priscus*, the fifth king, we first hear mentioned, that it was done *populi impetratâ veniâ*; which indeed was but very reasonable for a free people to expect; though I cannot remember, in my little reading, by what incidents they were brought to advance so great a step. However it were, this prince in gratitude to the people, by whose consent he was chosen, elected a hundred senators out of the commons, whose number, with former additions, was now amounted to three hundred.

The people having once discovered their own strength, did soon take occasion to exert it, and that by very great degrees. For at this king's death, who was murdered by the sons of a former, being at a loss for a successor, *Servius Tullius*, a stranger, and of mean extraction, was chosen protector of the kingdom by the *people*, without the consent of the senate; at which the nobles being displeased, he wholly applied himself to gratify the commons, and was by them declared and confirmed no longer protector, but king.

This prince first introduced the custom of giving freedom to servants, so as to become citizens of equal privileges with the rest, which very much contributed to increase the power of the *people*.

Thus in a very few years the commons proceeded so far, as to wrest even the power of choosing a king entirely out of the hands of the nobles; which was so great a leap, and caused such a convulsion and struggle in the state, that the constitution could not bear it; but civil dissensions arose, which immediately were followed by the tyranny of a single person, as this was by the utter subversion of the regal government, and by a settlement upon a new foundation. For the nobles, spighted at this indignity done them by the commons, firmly united in a body, deposed this prince by plain force, and chose *Tarquin the Proud*, who running into all the forms and methods of tyranny, after a cruel reign, was expelled by an universal concurrence of nobles and people, whom the miseries of his reign had reconciled.

When the consular government began, the balance of power between the nobles and plebeians was fixed anew: the two first consuls were nominated by the nobles, and confirmed by the commons; and a law was enacted, That no person should bear any magistracy in *Rome*, *injussu populi*, that is, without *consent of the commons*.

In such turbulent times as these, many of the poorer citizens had contracted numerous debts either to the richer sort among themselves, or to senators and other nobles: and the case of debtors in *Rome* for the first four* centuries was, after the set time for payment, no choice but either to pay or be the creditor's slave. In this juncture the commons leave the city in mutiny and discontent, and will not return but upon condition to be acquitted of all their debts; and moreover, that certain magistrates be chosen yearly, whose business it shall be to defend the commons from injuries. These are called *tribunes* of the people, their persons are held sacred and inviolable, and the people bind themselves by oath never to abrogate the office. By these tribunes, in process of time, the people were grossly imposed on to serve the turns and occasions of revengeful or ambitious men, and to commit such exorbitances as could not end, but in the dissolution of the government.

These tribunes, a year or two after their institution, kindled great dissensions between the nobles and the commons on the account of *Coriolanus*, a nobleman, whom the latter had *impeached*, and the consequences of whose impeachment (if I had not confined myself to *Grecian* examples for that part of my subject) had like to have been so fatal to their state. And from this time the tribunes began a custom of accusing to the people whatever nobles they pleased, several of whom were banished or put to death in every age.

* Ab Urba Condite. From the building of the city.

At this time the *Romans* were very much engaged in wars with their neighbouring states; but upon the least intervals of peace the quarrels between the nobles and the plebeians would revive; and one of the most frequent subjects of their differences was the *conquered lands*, which the commons would fain have divided among the publick; but the senate could not be brought to give their consent. For several of the wisest among the nobles began to apprehend the growing power of the people; and therefore knowing what an accession thereof would accrue to them by such an addition of property, used all means to prevent it: for this the *Appian* family was most noted, and thereupon most hated by the commons. One of them having made a speech against this division of lands, was impeached by the people of high treason, and a day appointed for his trial; but disdaining to make his defence, he chose rather the usual *Roman* remedy of killing himself: after whose death the commons prevailed, and the lands were divided among them.

This point was no sooner gained, but new dissensions began: for the plebeians would fain have a law enacted to lay all mens rights and privileges upon the same level; and to enlarge the power of every magistrate within his own jurisdiction, as much as that of the consuls. The tribunes also obtained to have their number doubled, which before was five: and the author tells us, † that their insolence and power encreased with their number, and the seditions were also doubled with it.

By the beginning of the fourth century from the building of *Rome*, the tribunes proceeded so far in the name of the commons, as to accuse and fine the consuls themselves, who represented the kingly power. And the senate observing, how in all contentions they were forced to yield to the tribunes and people, thought it their wisest course to give way also to time; therefore a decree was

† Dionys. Halicar.

made to send ambaffadors to *Athens*, and to the other *Grecian* commonwealths planted in that part of *Italy* called *Græcia Major*, to make a collection of the best laws ; out of which, and some of their own, a new compleat body of law was formed, afterwards known by the name of the *laws of the twelve tables*.

To digest these laws into order ten men were chosen, and the administration of all affairs left in their hands ; what use they made of it has been already shewn. It was certainly a great revolution, produced entirely by the many unjust encroachments of the people ; and might have wholly changed the fate of *Rome*, if the folly and vice of those, who were chiefly concerned, could have suffered it to take root.

A few years after the commons made farther advances on the power of the nobles ; demanding among the rest that the consulship, which hitherto had only been disposed to the former, should now lie in common to the pretensions of any *Roman* whatsoever. This, though it failed at present, yet afterwards obtained, and was a mighty step to the ruin of the commonwealth.

What I have hitherto said of *Rome*, has been chiefly collected out of that exact and diligent writer *Dionysius Halicarnassæus*, whose history, through the injury of time, reaches no farther than to the beginning of the fourth century after the building of *Rome*. The rest I shall supply from other authors ; though I do not think it necessary to deduce this matter any further so very particularly, as I have hitherto done.

To point at what time the balance of power was most equally held between the *lords* and *commons* in *Rome*, would perhaps admit a controversy. † *Polybius* tells us, that in the second *Punick* war the *Carthaginians* were declining, because the balance was got too much on the side of the people ; whereas the *Romans* were in their greatest vigour by the power remaining in the senate :

† *Fragm. lib. 6.*

yet this was between two and three hundred years after the period *Dionysius* ends with ; in which time the commons had made several further acquisitions. This however must be granted, that (till about the middle of the fourth century) when the senate appeared resolute at any time upon exerting their authority, and adhered closely together, they did often carry their point. † Besides, it is observed by the best authors, that in all the quarrels and tumults at *Rome*, from the expulsion of the kings, though the people frequently proceeded to rude contumelious language, and sometimes so far as to pull and hale one another about the *forum*, yet no blood was ever drawn in any popular commotions, till the time of the *Gracchi* : however, I am of opinion, that the balance had begun many years before to lean to the popular side. But this default was corrected, partly by the principle just mentioned, of never drawing blood in a tumult ; partly by the warlike genius of the people, which in those ages was almost perpetually employed ; and partly by their great commanders, who by the credit they had in their armies fell into the scales as a further counterpoise to the growing power of the people. Besides, *Polybius*, who lived in the time of *Scipio Africanus* the younger, had the same apprehensions of the continual encroachments made by the commons ; and being a person of as great abilities, and as much sagacity, as any of his age, from observing the corruptions, which, he says, had already entered into the *Roman* constitution, did very nearly foretell what would be the issue of them. His words are very remarkable, and with little addition may be rendered to this purpose. ‡ *That those abuses and corruptions, which in time destroy a government, are sown along with the very seeds of it, and both grow up together ; and that as rust eats away iron, and worms devour wood, and both are a sort of plagues born and bred along with the substance they destroy ; so with every form and scheme of government*

† Dionys. Hal. Plutarch, &c.

‡ Lib. 5.

that

that man can invent, some vice or corruption creeps in with the very institution, which grows up along with, and at last destroys it. † The same author in another place ventures so far as to guess at the particular fate, which would attend the *Roman* government. He says, its ruin would arise from the popular tumults, which would introduce a *dominatio plebis*, or tyranny of the people; wherein it is certain he had reason, and therefore might have adventured to pursue his conjectures so far, as to the consequences of a popular tyranny, which, as perpetual experience teaches, never fails to be followed by the arbitrary government of a single person.

About the middle of the fourth century from the building of *Rome*, it was declared lawful for *nobles* and *plebeians* to intermarry; which custom among many other states has proved the most effectual means to ruin the former, and raise the latter.

And now the greatest employments in the state were one after another, by laws forcibly enacted by the *commons*, made free to the people, the *consulship* itself, the office of *censor*, that of the *quæstors* or *commissioners of the treasury*, the office of *prætor* or chief justice, the *priesthood*, and even that of *dictator*: the senate, after long opposition, yielding merely for present quiet to the continual urging clamours of the *commons*, and of the *tribunes* their advocates. A law was likewise enacted, that the *plebiscita*, or a vote of the house of commons, should be of universal obligation; nay, in time the method of enacting laws was wholly inverted; for whereas the senate used of old to confirm the *plebiscita*, the people did at last, as they pleased, confirm or disannul the ‡ *senatusconsulta*.

Appius Claudius brought in a custom of admitting to the senate the sons of freed men, or of such who had once been slaves; by which, and succeeding alterations of the like nature, that great

† *Fragm. lib. 6.*

‡ *Dionys. lib. 2.*

council degenerated into a most corrupt and factious body of men, divided against itself; and its authority became despised.

The century and half following, to the end of the third *Punic* war by the destruction of *Carthage*, was a very busy period at *Rome*; the intervals between every war being so short, that the *tribunes* and *people* had hardly leisure or breath to engage in domestick dissensions: however, the little time they could spare, was generally employed the same way. So *Terentius Leo*, a *tribune*, is recorded to have basely prostituted the privileges of a *Roman* citizen, in perfect spight to the *nobles*. So the great *African Scipio* and his brother, after all their mighty services, were impeached by an ungrateful *commons*.

However, the warlike genius of the people, and continual employment they had for it, served to divert this humour from running into a head, till the age of the *Gracchi*.

These persons entering the scene in the time of a full peace, fell violently upon advancing the power of the people by reducing into practice all those encroachments, which they had been so many years gaining. There were at that time certain *conquered lands* to be divided, beside a *great private estate left by a king*: these the *tribunes*, by procurement of the elder *Gracchus*, declared by their legislative authority, were not to be disposed of by the *nobles*, but by the *commons* only. The younger brother pursued the same design; and besides, obtained a law, that all *Italians* should vote at elections, as well as the citizens of *Rome*: in short, the whole endeavours of them both perpetually turned upon retrenching the *nobles* authority in all things, but especially in the matter of *judicature*. And though they both lost their lives in those pursuits, yet they traced out such ways, as were afterwards followed by *Marius*, *Sylla*, *Pompey* and *Cæsar*, to the ruin of the *Roman* freedom and greatness.

For in the time of *Marius*, *Saturninus* a *tribune* procured a law, that the senate should be bound by oath to agree to whatever

the people would enact: and *Marius* himself, while he was in that office of tribune, is recorded to have with great industry used all endeavours for depressing the *nobles*, and raising the people, particularly for cramping the former in their *power of judicature*, which was *their most ancient inherent right*.

Sylla by the same measures became absolute tyrant of *Rome*: he added three hundred commons to the senate, which perplexed the power of the whole order, and rendered it ineffectual; then flinging off the mask, he abolished the office of tribune, as being only a scaffold to tyranny, whereof he had no further use.

As to *Pompey* and *Cæsar*, *Plutarch* tells us, that their union for pulling down the *nobles* (by their credit with the people) was the cause of the civil war, which ended in the tyranny of the latter; both of them in their consulships having used all endeavours and occasions for sinking the authority of the *patricians*, and giving way to all encroachments of the people, wherein they expected best to find their own account.

From this deduction of popular encroachments in *Rome* the reader will easily judge, how much the balance was fallen upon that side. Indeed by this time the very foundation was removed, and it was a moral impossibility, that the republick could subsist any longer: for the *commons* having usurped the offices of state, and trampled on the senate, there was no government left but a *dominatio plebis*. Let us therefore examine how they proceeded in this conjuncture.

I think it is an universal truth, that the people are much more dexterous at pulling down and setting up, than at preserving what is fixed; and they are not fonder of seizing more than their own, than they are of delivering it up again to the *worst bidder*, with their own into the bargain. For although in their corrupt notions of divine worship, they are apt to multiply their gods; yet their earthly devotion is seldom paid to above one idol at a time of their own creation, whose *oar* they pull with less murmuring and much more

more skill, than when they *share the lading*, or even *hold the helm*.

The several provinces of the *Roman* empire were now governed by the great men of their state; those upon the frontiers with powerful armies either for conquest or defence. These governors upon any designs of revenge or ambition were sure to meet with a divided power at home, and therefore bent all their thoughts and applications to close in with the people, who were now by many degrees the stronger party. Two of the greatest spirits, that *Rome* ever produced, happened to live at the same time, and to be engaged in the same pursuit; and this at a conjuncture the most dangerous for such a contest: these were *Pompey* and *Cæsar*, two stars of such a magnitude, that their *conjunction* was as likely to be fatal, as their *opposition*.

The *tribunes* and people, having now subdued all competitors, began the last game of a prevalent populace, which is that of chusing themselves a *master*; while the nobles foresaw, and used all endeavours left them to prevent it. The people at first made *Pompey* their admiral with full power over all the *Mediterranean*, soon after captain-general of all the *Roman* forces, and governor of *Asia*. *Pompey* on the other side restored the office of *tribune*, which *Sylla* had put down; and in his consulship procured a law for *examining into the miscarriages of men in office or command for twenty years past*. Many other examples of *Pompey's* popularity are left us on record, who was a perfect favourite of the people, and designed to be more; but his pretensions grew stale for want of a timely opportunity of introducing them upon the stage. For *Cæsar*, with his legions in *Gaul*, was a perpetual check upon his designs; and in the arts of pleasing the people did soon after get many lengths beyond him. For he tells us himself, that the senate by a bold effort having made some severe decrees against his proceedings, and against the *tribunes*, these all left the city, and went over to his party, and consequently along with

them the affections and interests of the people ; which is further manifest from the accounts he gives us of the citizens in several towns mutinying against their commanders, and delivering both to his devotion. Besides, *Cæsar's* publick and avowed pretensions for beginning the civil war were to restore the tribunes and the people oppressed (as he pretended) by the *nobles*.

This forced *Pompey*, against his inclinations, upon the necessity of changing sides, for fear of being forsaken by both ; and of closing in with the senate and chief magistrates, by whom he was chosen general against *Cæsar*.

Thus at length the *senate* (at least the primitive part of them, the *nobles*) under *Pompey*, and the *commons* under *Cæsar*, came to a final decision of the long quarrels between them. For, I think, the ambition of private men did by no means begin or occasion this war ; though civil dissensions never fail of introducing and spiring the ambition of private men ; who thus become indeed the great instruments for deciding of such quarrels, and at last are sure to seize on the prize. But no man, that sees a flock of vultures hovering over two armies ready to engage, can justly charge the blood drawn in the battle to them, though the carcasses fall to their share. For while the balance of power is equally held, the ambition of private men, whether orators or great commanders, gives neither danger nor fear, nor can possibly enslave their country ; but that once broken, the divided parties are forced to unite each to its head, under whose conduct or fortune one side is at first victorious, and at last both are slaves. And to put it past dispute, that this entire subversion of the *Roman* liberty and constitution was altogether owing to those measures, which had broke the balance between the *patricians* and *plebeians*, whereof the ambition of particular men was but an effect and consequence, we need only consider, that when the uncorrupted part of the senate had, by the death of *Cæsar*, made one great effort to restore their former state and liberty, the success did

did not answer their hopes, but that whole assembly was so sunk in its authority, that those patriots were forced to fly, and give way to the madness of the people, who by their own dispositions, stirred up with the harrangues of their orators, were now wholly bent upon single and despotick slavery. Else, how could such a profligate as *Antony*, or a boy of eighteen, like *Octavius*, ever dare to dream of giving the law to such an empire and people? wherein the latter succeeded, and entailed the vilest tyranny, that heaven in its anger ever inflicted on a corrupt and poisoned people. And this, with so little appearance at *Cæsar's* death, that when *Cicero* wrote to *Brutus*, how he had prevailed by his credit with *Octavius* to promise him (*Brutus*) pardon and security for his person, that great *Roman* received the notice with the utmost indignity, and returned *Cicero* an answer, yet upon record, full of the highest resentment and contempt for such an offer, and from such a hand.

Here ended all shew or shadow of liberty in *Rome*. Here was the repository of all the wise contentions and struggles for power between the nobles and commons, lapped up safely in the bosom of a *Nero* and a *Caligula*, a *Tiberius* and a *Domitian*.

Let us now see from this deduction of particular impeachments, and general dissensions in *Greece* and *Rome*, what conclusions may naturally be formed for instruction of any other state, that may haply upon many points labour under the like circumstances.

C H A P. IV.

UPON the subject of *impeachments* we may observe, that the custom of accusing the nobles to the people, either by themselves, or their orators, (now styled an *impeachment in the name of the commons*) hath been very antient both in *Greece* and *Rome*, as well as *Carthage*; and therefore may seem to be the inherent right of a free people, nay, perhaps it is really so: but then it is
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to be considered, first, that this custom was peculiar to republics, or such states, where the administration lay principally in the hands of the commons, and ever raged more or less, according to their encroachments upon absolute power; having been always looked upon by the wisest men and best authors of those times, as an effect of licentiousness, and not of liberty; a distinction, which no multitude either *represented* or *collective* hath been at any time very nice in observing. However, perhaps this custom in a popular state of impeaching particular men may seem to be nothing else, but the people's chusing upon occasion to exercise their own jurisdiction in person; as if a king of *England* should sit as chief justice in his court of *king's bench*; which, they say, in former times he sometimes did. But in *Sparta*, which was called a kingly government, though the people were perfectly free, yet because the administration was in the two kings and the *ephori* with the assistance of the senate, we read of no impeachments by the people, nor was the process against great men, either upon account of ambition or ill conduct, though it reached sometimes to kings themselves, ever formed that way, as I can recollect, but only passed through those hands, where the administration lay. So likewise during the regal government in *Rome*, though it was instituted a mixed monarchy, and the people made great advances in power, yet I do not remember to have read of one impeachment from the commons against a patrician, until the consular state began, and the people had made great encroachments upon the administration.

Another thing to be considered is, that allowing this right of impeachment to be as inherent as they please, yet, if the commons have been perpetually mistaken in the merits of the causes and the persons, as well as in the consequences of such impeachments upon the peace of the state, we cannot conclude less, than that the commons in *Greece* and *Rome* (whatever they may be in other states) were by no means qualified either as prosecutors or judges
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in such matters; and therefore, that it would have been prudent, to have reserved these privileges dormant, never to be produced but upon very great and urging occasions, where the state is in apparent danger, the universal body of the people in clamours against the administration, and no other remedy in view. But for a few popular orators or tribunes, upon the score of *personal piques*; or *to employ the pride they conceive in seeing themselves at the head of a party*; or *as a method for advancement*; or *moved by certain powerful arguments that could make Demosthenes Philippize*: for such men, I say, when the state would of itself gladly be quiet, and hath, besides, affairs of the last importance upon the anvil, to *impeach** Miltiades *after a great naval victory, for not pursuing the Persian fleet*: to *impeach* Aristides, *the person most versed among them in the knowledge and practice of their laws, for a blind suspicion of his acting in an arbitrary way (that is, as they expound it, not in concert with the people)*: to *impeach* Pericles, *after all his services, for a few inconsiderable accounts*; or to *impeach* Phocion, *who had been guilty of no other crime but negotiating a treaty for the peace and security of his country*: what could the continuance of such proceedings end in, but the utter discouragement of all virtuous actions and persons, and consequently in the ruin of a state? therefore the historians of those ages seldom fail to set this matter in all its lights, leaving us the highest and most honourable *ideas* of those persons, who suffered by the persecution of the people, together with the fatal consequences they had, and how the persecutors seldom failed to repent, when it was too late.

These impeachments perpetually falling upon many of the best men both in *Greece* and *Rome*, are a cloud of witnesses, and examples enough to discourage men of virtue and abilities from engaging in the service of the publick; and help on the other side to

* Though in other passages lord Orford's character is supposed to be drawn under the name of *Themistocles*, yet he seems to be represented by *Miltiades* here; for *Themistocles* was not impeached at all. See p. 20.

introduce

introduce the ambitious, the covetous, the superficial, and the ill-defining; who are as apt to be bold, and forward, and meddling, as the former are to be cautious, and modest, and reserved. This was so well known in *Greece*, that an eagerness after employments in the state was looked upon by wise men, as the worst title a man could set up; and made *Plato* say, *That if all men were as good as they ought, the quarrel in a commonwealth would be, not as it is now, who should be ministers of state, but who should not be so.* And * *Socrates* is introduced by *Xenophon* severely chiding a friend of his for not entering into the publick service, when he was every way qualified for it: such a backwardness there was at that time among good men to engage with an usurping people, and a sett of *pragmatical ambitious orators*. And † *Diodorus* tells us, that when the *petalism* was erected at *Syracuse*, in imitation of the ‡ *ostracism* at *Athens*, it was so notoriously levelled against all who had either birth or merit to recommend them, that whoever possessed either, withdrew for fear, and would have no concern in publick affairs. So that the people themselves were forced to abrogate it for fear of bringing all things into confusion.

There is one thing more to be observed, wherein all the popular impeachments in *Greece* and *Rome* seem to have agreed; and that was, a notion they had of being concerned in *point of honour* to condemn whatever person they impeached, however frivolous the articles were, upon which they began, or however weak the surmises, whereon they were to proceed in their proofs. For, to conceive that the body of the people could be mistaken,

* Lib. Memorab. † Lib. II.

‡ *Ostracism* was a kind of popular sentence to banishment passed against men whose personal influence, from whatever cause, was thought to render them dangerous to the state: the votes were given by writing the name of the person on a shell, by the *Greeks*, called *ὄστρακον*, and casting the shell into an urn.

Petalism was a sentence nearly of the same kind; and as *Ostracism* was denominated from the shell, on which the name of the suspected party was written, *Petalism* took its name from *πέταλον*, a leaf, which the *Syracusians* used for the same purpose.

was an indignity not to be imagined, till the consequences had convinced them, when it was past remedy. And I look upon this as a fate, to which all popular accusations are subject; though I should think that the saying, *Vox populi vox Dei*, ought to be understood of the universal bent and current of a people, not of the *bare majority* of a few representatives, which is often procured by *little arts*, and great industry and application; wherein those, who engage in the pursuits of malice and revenge, are much more sedulous than such as would prevent them.

From what hath been deduced of the *dissentions* in *Rome* between the two bodies of patricians and plebeians, several reflections may be made.

First, That when the balance of power is duly fixed in a state, nothing is more dangerous or unwise, than to give way to the *first steps* of popular encroachments; which is usually done either in hopes of procuring ease and quiet from some vexatious clamour, or else *made merchandize, and merely bought and sold*. This is breaking into a constitution to serve a present expedient, or supply a present exigency: the remedy of an empirick, to stifle the present pain, but with certain prospect of sudden and terrible returns. When a child grows easy and content by being humoured; and when a lover becomes satisfied by small compliances, without further pursuits; then expect to find popular assemblies content with small concessions. If there could one single example be brought from the whole compass of history, of any one popular assembly, who, after beginning to contend for power, ever sat down quietly with a certain share: or if one instance could be produced of a popular assembly, that ever knew, or proposed, or declared what share of power was their due; then might there be some hopes, that it were a matter to be adjusted by reasonings, by conferences, or debates: but since all that is manifestly otherwise, I see no other course to be taken in a settled state, than a steady constant resolution in those, to whom the rest of the balance

is entrusted, never to give way so far to popular clamours, as to make the least breach in the constitution, through which a million of abuses and encroachments will certainly in time force their way.

Again, from this deduction it will not be difficult to gather and assign certain marks of popular encroachments; by observing of which, those who hold the balance in a state may judge of the degrees, and, by early remedies and application, put a stop to the fatal consequences that would otherwise ensue. What those marks are, hath been at large deduced, and need not be here repeated.

Another consequence is this: that (with all respect for popular assemblies be it spoke) it is hard to recollect one folly, infirmity, or vice, to which a single man is subjected, and from which a body of commons, either collective or represented, can be wholly exempt. For, besides that they are composed of men with all their infirmities about them, they have also the ill fortune to be generally led and influenced by the very worst among themselves, I mean, *popular orators, tribunes*, or, as they are now styled, *great speakers, leading men*, and the like. From whence it comes to pass, that in their results we have sometimes found the same spirit of cruelty and revenge, of malice and pride, the same blindness and obstinacy and unsteadiness, the same ungovernable rage and anger, the same injustice sophistry and fraud, that ever lodged in the breast of any individual.

Again, in all free states the evil to be avoided is *tyranny*, that is to say, the *summa imperii* or unlimited power solely in the hands of the *one*, the *few*, or the *many*. Now, we have shewn, that although most revolutions of government in *Greece* and *Rome* began with the tyranny of the people, yet they generally concluded in that of a single person; so that an usurping populace is its own *dupe*; a meer underworker, and a purchaser in trust for some single tyrant, whose state and power they advance to their own ruin, with as blind an instinct, as those worms that die with weaving magnificent habits for beings of a superior nature to their own.

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

SOME reflections upon the late publick proceedings among us, and that variety of factions into which we are still so intricately engaged, gave occasion to this discourse. I am not conscious, that I have forced one example, or put it into any other light than it appeared to me long before I had thought of producing it.

I cannot conclude without adding some particular remarks upon the present posture of affairs and dispositions in this kingdom.

The fate of empire is grown a common-place: that all forms of government having been instituted by men, must be mortal like their authors, and have their periods of duration limited as well as those of private persons. This is a truth of vulgar knowledge and observation: but there are few, who turn their thoughts to examine, how those diseases in a state are bred, that hasten its end; which would however be a very useful enquiry. For though we cannot prolong the period of a commonwealth beyond the decree of heaven, or the date of its nature, any more than human life beyond the strength of the feminal virtue; yet we may manage a sickly constitution; and preserve a strong one; we may watch and prevent accidents; we may turn off a great blow from without, and purge away an ill humour that is lurking within: and by these, and other such methods render a state long lived, though not immortal. Yet some physicians have thought, that if it were practicable to keep the several humours of the body in an exact equal balance of each with its opposite, it might be immortal, and so perhaps would a political body, if the balance of power could be always held exactly even. But, I doubt, this is as impossible in practice as the other.

It hath an appearance of fatality, and that the period of a state approacheth, when a concurrence of many circumstances, both within and without, unite towards its ruin: while the whole body

of the people are either stupidly negligent, or else giving in with all their might to those very practices, that are working their destruction. To see whole bodies of men breaking a constitution by the very same errors, that so many have been broke before: to observe opposite parties, who can agree in nothing else, yet firmly united in such measures, as must certainly ruin their country: in short, to be encompassed with the greatest dangers from without, to be torn by many virulent factions within; then to be secure and senseless under all this, and to make it the very least of our concern; these, and some others that might be named, appear to me to be the most likely symptoms in a state of a *sickness unto death*.

Quod procul a nobis flectat fortuna gubernans:
Et ratio potius, quam res persuadeat ipsa. LUCRET.

There are some conjunctures, wherein the death or dissolution of government is more lamentable in its consequences, than it would be in others. And, I think, a state can never arrive to its period in a more deplorable *crisis*, than at a time when some *prince in the neighbourhood*, of vast power and ambition, lies hovering like a vulture to devour, or, at least, dismember its dying carcass; by which means it becomes only a province or acquisition to some mighty monarchy, without hopes of a resurrection.

I know very well, there is a set of sanguine tempers, who deride and ridicule, in the number of fopperies, all such apprehensions as these. They have it ready in their mouths, that the people of *England* are of a genius and temper never to admit slavery among them; and they are furnished with a great many common places upon that subject. But it seems to me, that such discoursers do reason upon short views, and a very moderate compass of thought. For, I think, it a great error to count upon the genius of a nation as a standing argument in all ages, since there is hardly a spot of ground in *Europe*, where the inhabitants

habitants have not frequently and entirely changed their temper and genius. Neither can I see any reason, why the genius of a nation should be more fixed in the point of government, than in their morals, their learning, their religion, their common humour and conversation, their diet and their complexion; which do all notoriously vary almost in every age, and may every one of them have great effects upon mens notions of government.

Since the *Norman* conquest the balance of power in *England* hath often varied, and sometimes been wholly overturned; the part which the commons had in it, (*that most disputed point*) in its original, progress, and extent, was, by their own confessions, but a very inconsiderable share. Generally speaking, they have been gaining ever since, though with frequent interruptions and slow progress. The abolishing of *villanage*, together with the custom introduced (or permitted) among the nobles of selling their lands in the reign of *Henry* the Seventh, was a mighty addition to the power of the commons: yet I think a much greater happened in the time of his successor, at the dissolution of the abbeys; for this turned the *clergy* wholly out of the scale, who had so long filled it; and placed the *commons* in their stead; who in a few years became possessed of vast quantities of those and other lands, by grant or purchase. About the middle of queen *Elizabeth's* reign, I take the power between the nobles and the commons to have been in more equal balance, than it was ever before or since. But then or soon after arose a faction in *England*, which under the name of *puritan* began to grow popular by molding up their new schemes of religion with republican principles in government; and, gaining upon the *prerogative* as well as the *nobles*, under several denominations, for the space of about sixty years, did at last overthrow the constitution, and, according to the usual course of such revolutions, did introduce a tyranny, first of the people, and then of a single person.

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In a short time after, the old government was revived. But the progress of affairs for almost thirty years, under the reigns of two weak princes †, is a subject of a very different nature : when the balance was in danger to be overturned by the hands that held it, which was at last very seasonably prevented by the late revolution. However, as it is the talent of human nature to run from one extreme to another, so in a very few years we have made mighty leaps from prerogative heights into the depths of popularity, and, I doubt, to the very last degree that our constitution will bear. It were to be wished, that the most august assembly of the commons would please to form a *pandect* of their own power and privileges, to be confirmed by the entire legislative authority, and that in as solemn a manner (if they please) as the *magna charta*. But to fix one foot of their compass wherever they think fit, and extend the other to such terrible lengths, without describing any circumference at all, is to leave us and themselves in a very uncertain state, and in a sort of *rotation*, that * the author of the *Oceana* never dreamed on. I believe the most hardy tribune will not venture to affirm at present, that any just fears of encroachment are given us from the regal power, or the *few* : and, is it then impossible to err on the other side? How far must we proceed, or where shall we stop? *The raging of the sea*, and *the madness of the people* are put together in holy writ ; and it is God alone who can say to either, *Hitherto shalt thou pass, and no further*.

The balance of power in a limited state is of such absolute necessity, that *Cromwell* himself, before he had perfectly confirmed his tyranny, having some occasions for the appearance of a par-

† *Charles II.* and *James II.*

* *Mr. James Harrington*, sometime in the service of king *Charles I.* after whose death he drew up and printed a form of popular government, entitled, *The Commonwealth of Oceana* : he endeavoured likewise to promote this scheme by publick discourses at a nightly meeting of se-

veral curious gentlemen in *New Palace-Yard, Westminster*. This club was called the *Rota*; and *Mr. Henry Nevil*, one of its members, proposed to the then house of commons, that a third part of the senate should *rote* out by ballot every year, and be incapable of being elected again for three years to come.

liament,

liament, was forced to create and erect an entire new house of lords (such as it was) for a counterpoise to the commons. And indeed, considering the vileness of the clay, I have sometimes wondered, that no tribune of that age durst ever venture to ask the *potter*, *What dost thou make?* But it was then about the last act of a popular usurpation, and *fate* or *Cromwell* had already prepared them for that of a single person.

I have been often amazed at the rude, passionate, and mistaken results, which have at certain times fallen from great assemblies, both ancient and modern, and of other countries as well as our own. This gave me the opinion, I mentioned a while ago; that publick conventions are liable to all the infirmities, follies, and vices of private men. To which, if there be any exception, it must be of such assemblies, who act by *universal concert, upon publick principles, and for publick ends*; such as proceed upon debates without *unbecoming warmth*, or *influence from particular leaders and inflammers*; such whose members instead of *canvassing to procure majorities for their private opinions, are ready to comply with general sober results, though contrary to their own sentiments*. Whatever assemblies act by these and other methods of the like nature, must be allowed to be exempt from several imperfections, to which particular men are subjected. But I think the source of most mistakes and miscarriages in matters debated by publick assemblies, ariseth from the influence of private persons upon great numbers, styled in common phrase, *leading men and parties*. And therefore when we sometimes meet a *few words* put together, which is called the *vote* or *resolution* of an assembly, and which we cannot possibly reconcile to *prudence* or *publick good*, it is most charitable to conjecture, that such a vote has been conceived, and born, and bred in a private brain, afterwards raised and supported by an obsequious party, and then with usual methods confirmed by an *artificial* majority. For, let us suppose five hundred men, mixed in point of sense and honesty, as usually

usually assemblies are ; and let us suppose these men proposing, debating, resolving, voting, according to the meer natural motions of their own little or much reason and understanding ; I do allow, that abundance of indigested and abortive, many pernicious and foolish overtures would arise, and float a few minutes ; but then they would die and disappear. Because, this must be said in behalf of humankind, that common sense and plain reason, while men are disengaged from acquired opinions, will ever have some general influence upon their minds ; whereas the species of folly and vice are infinite, and so different in every individual, that they could never procure a majority, if other corruptions did not enter to pervert mens understandings, and misguide their wills.

To describe how parties are bred in an assembly, would be a work too difficult at present, and perhaps not altogether safe. *Periculosa plenum opus aleæ.* Whether those, who are leaders, usually arrive at that station more by a sort of instinct or secret composition of their nature, or influence of the stars, than by the possession of any great abilities, may be a point of much dispute : but when the leader is once fixed, there will never fail to be followers. And man is so apt to *imitate*, so much of the nature of *sheep*, (*imitatores, servum pecus*) that whoever is so bold to give the first *great leap over the heads of those about him*, though he be the worst of the flock, shall be quickly followed by the rest. Besides, when parties are once formed, the stragglers look so ridiculous, and become so insignificant, that they have no other way, but to run into the herd, which at least will hide and protect them ; and where to be much considered, requires only to be very violent.

But there is one circumstance with relation to parties, which I take to be of all others most pernicious in a state ; and I would be glad any partizan would help me to a tolerable reason, that because *Clodius* and *Curio* happen to agree with me in a few singular

gular notions, I must therefore blindly follow them in all : or, to state it at best, that because *Bibulus* the *party-man* is persuaded, that *Clodius* and *Curio* do really propose the good of their country as their chief end ; therefore *Bibulus* shall be wholly guided and governed by them in the means and measures towards it. Is it enough for *Bibulus*, and the rest of the herd, to say without further examining, *I am of the side with Clodius, or I vote with Curio?* are these proper methods to form and make up what they think fit to call the *united wisdom of the nation?* Is it not possible, that upon some occasion *Clodius* may be bold and insolent, borne away by his passion, malicious, and revengeful ? That *Curio* may be corrupt, and expose to sale his tongue, or his pen ? I conceive it far below the dignity both of human nature, and human reason, to be engaged in any party, the most plausible soever, upon such servile conditions.

This influence of *one* upon *many*, which seems to be as great in a people *represented*, as it was of old in the commons *collective*, together with the consequences it hath had upon the legislature, hath given me frequent occasion to reflect upon what *Diodorus* tells us of one *Charondas*, a law-giver to the *Sybarites*, an ancient people of *Italy*, who was so averse from all innovation, especially when it was to proceed from particular persons, (and I suppose, that he might put it out of the power of men fond of their own notions to disturb the constitution at their pleasures, by advancing private schemes) that he provided a statute, that whoever proposed any alteration to be made, should step out and do it with a rope about his neck : if the matter proposed were generally approved, then it should pass into a law ; if it went in the negative, the proposer to be immediately *hanged*. Great ministers may talk of what projects they please ; but I am deceived, if a more effectual one could ever be found for *taking off* (as the present phrase is) those hot, unquiet spirits, who disturb

asssemblies, and obstruct publick affairs, by gratifying their pride, their malice, their ambition, or their avarice.

Those, who in a late reign began the distinction between the *personal* and *politick* capacity, seem to have had reason, if they judged of princes by themselves; for, I think, there is hardly to be found through all nature a greater difference between two things, than there is between a representing commoner in the function of his publick calling, and the same person when he acts in the common offices of life. Here he allows himself to be upon a level with the rest of mortals: here he follows his own reason, and his own way; and rather affects a singularity in his actions and thoughts, than servilely to copy either from the wisest of his neighbours. In short, here his folly, and his wisdom, his reason and his passions are all of his own growth, not the eccho or infusion of other men. But when he is got near the walls of his assembly, he assumes and affects an entire sett of very different airs; he conceives himself a being of a superior nature to those *without*, and acting in a sphere, where the vulgar methods for the conduct of human life can be of no use. He is listed in a party; where he neither knows the temper, nor designs, nor perhaps the person of his leader; but whose opinions he follows and maintains with a zeal and faith as violent, as a young scholar does those of a philosopher, whose sect he is taught to profess. He hath neither opinions, nor thoughts, nor actions, nor talk, that he can call his own, but all conveyed to him by his leader, as wind is through an organ. The nourishment he receives, hath been not only *chewed*, but *digested*, before it comes into his mouth. Thus instructed, he follows the *party* right or wrong through all its sentiments, and acquires a courage and stiffness of opinion not at all congenial with him.

This encourages me to hope, that during the present lucid interval, the members retired to their homes may suspend a while their *acquired* complexions, and taught by the calmness of the scene

scene and the season, reassume the *native* sedateness of their temper. If this should be so, it would be wise in them, as individual and private mortals, to look back a little upon the storms they have *raised*, as well as those they have *escaped*. To reflect, that they have been authors of a new and wonderful thing in *England*, which is, for a house of commons to lose the universal favour of the numbers they represent: to observe, how those, whom they thought fit to persecute for righteousness sake, have been openly caressed by the people; and to remember how themselves fate in fear of their persons from popular rage. Now, if they would know the secret of all this unprecedented proceeding in their *masters*, they must not impute it to their freedom in debate, or declaring their opinions, but to that unparliamentary abuse of *setting individuals upon their shoulders*, who were hated by God and man. For, it seems the mass of the people, in such conjunctures as this, have opened their eyes, and will not endure to be governed by *Clodius* and *Curio*, at the head of their *Myrmidons*, though these be ever so numerous, and composed of their own representatives.

This aversion of the people against the late proceedings of the commons is an accident, that, if it last a while, might be improved to good uses for setting the balance of power a little more upon an equality, than their late measures seem to promise or admit. This accident may be imputed to two causes: the first is an universal fear and apprehension of the greatness and power of *France*, whereof the people in general seem to be very much and justly possessed, and therefore cannot but resent to see it, in so critical a juncture, wholly laid aside by their *ministers*, the commons. The other cause is a great love and sense of gratitude in the people towards their present *king*, grounded upon a long opinion and experience of his merit, as well as concessions to all their reasonable desires; so that it is for some time they have begun to say, and to fetch instances, where he hath in many things been hardly used. How long these humours may last, (for passi-

ons are momentary, and especially those of a multitude) or what consequences they may produce, a little time will discover. But whenever it comes to pass, that a popular assembly, free from such obstructions, and already possessed of more power, than an equal balance will allow, shall continue to think they have not enough, but by cramping the hand that holds the balance, and by *impeachments* or *dissentions* with the nobles, endeavour still for more; I cannot possibly see in the common course of things, how the same causes can produce different effects and consequences among us, from what they did in *Greece* and *Rome*.

THE

THE SENTIMENTS

OF A

Church of England Man.

With respect to

RELIGION and GOVERNMENT.

Written in the Year 1708. *

WHOEVER hath examined the conduct and proceedings of both *parties* for some years past, whether in or out of power, cannot well conceive it possible to go far towards the extremes of either, without offering some violence to his integrity or understanding. A wise and a good man may indeed be sometimes induced to comply with a number, whose opinion he generally approves, though it be perhaps against his own. But this liberty should be made use of upon very few occasions, and those of small importance, and then only with a view of bringing over his own side another time to something of greater and more publick moment. But to sacrifice the innocency of a friend, the good of our country, or our own conscience, to the humour, or passion, or interest of a party, plainly shews, that either our heads or our hearts are not as they should be: yet this very practice is the very fundamental law of each faction among us, as may be

* This appears to be an apology for the Tories, and a justification of them against the misrepresentations of the Whigs, who were then in the ministry, and used every artifice to perpetuate their power. Mr. *Harley*, afterwards lord *Oxford*, had by the influence of the duke of *Marl-*

borough and lord-treasurer *Gadolphin*, been lately removed from his post of principal secretary of state; and Mr. *St. John*, afterwards lord *Bolingbroke*, resigned his place of secretary at war, and sir *Simon Harcourt* that of attorney-general.

obvious.

obvious to any, who will impartially and without engagement be at the pains to examine their actions, which however is not so easy a task : for it seems a principle in human nature, to incline one way more than another, even in matters where we are wholly unconcerned. And it is a common observation, that in reading a history of facts done a thousand years ago, or standing by at play among those, who are perfect strangers to us, we are apt to find our hopes and wishes engaged on a sudden in favour of one side more than another. No wonder then that we are all so ready to interest ourselves in the course of publick affairs, where the most inconsiderable have some *real* share, and by the wonderful importance which every man is of to himself, a very great *imaginary* one.

And indeed, when the two parties, that divide the whole commonwealth, come once to a rupture, without any hopes left of forming a third with better principles to balance the others, it seems every man's duty to chuse one of the two sides, though he cannot entirely approve of either ; and all pretences to neutrality are justly exploded by both, being too stale and obvious, only intending the safety and ease of a few individuals, while the publick is embroiled. This was the opinion and practice of the latter *Cato*, whom I esteem to have been the wisest and best of all the *Romans* *. But before things proceed to open violence, the truest service a private man may hope to do his country, is by unbiasing his mind as much as possible, and then endeavouring to moderate between the rival powers, which must needs be owned a fair proceeding with the world, because it is of all others the least consistent with the common design of making a fortune by the *merit* of an *opinion*.

I have gone as far as I am able in qualifying myself to be such a moderator : I believe I am no *bigot* in religion, and I am sure

* One of the sextumvirate in *Gulliver*. Part III. Chap. VII.

I am

I am none in government. I converse in full freedom with many considerable men of both parties ; and if not in equal number, it is purely accidental and personal, as happening to be near the court, and to have made acquaintance there, more under one ministry than another. Then, I am not under the necessity of declaring my self by the prospect of an employment. And lastly, if all this be not sufficient, I industriously conceal my name, which wholly exempts me from any hopes and fears in delivering my opinion.

In consequence of this free use of my reason, I cannot possibly think so well or so ill of either party, as they would endeavour to persuade the world of each other, and of themselves. For instance ; I do not charge it upon the body of the *whigs* or the *tories*, that their several principles lead them to introduce presbytery, and the religion of the church of *Rome*, or a commonwealth, and arbitrary power. For why should any party be accused of a principle, which they solemnly disown and protest against ? But, to this they have a mutual answer ready : they both assure us, that their adversaries are not to be believed ; that they disown their principles out of fear, which are manifest enough, when we examine their practices. To prove this they will produce instances, on one side, either of avowed presbyterians, or persons of libertine and atheistical tenets, and on the other of professed papists, or such as are openly in the interest of the abdicated family. Now it is very natural for all subordinate sects and denominations in a state to side with some general party, and to chuse that, which they find to agree with themselves in some general principle. Thus at the *restoration* the presbyterians, anabaptists, independents, and other sects, did all, with very good reason, unite and folder up their several schemes to join against the *church*, who, without regard to their distinctions, treated them all as equal adversaries. Thus, our present dissenters do very naturally close in with the whigs, who profess *moderation*, declare they abhor all
thoughts

thoughts of *persecution*, and think it hard that those, who differ only in a few *ceremonies* and *speculations*, should be denied the privilege and profit of serving their country in the highest employments of state. Thus, the atheists, libertines, despisers of religion and revelation in general, that is to say, all those who usually pass under the name of *Free-thinkers*, do properly join with the same body; because *they* likewise preach up *moderation*, and are not so over-nice to distinguish between an unlimited liberty of conscience, and an unlimited freedom of opinion. Then, on the other side, the professed firmness of the *tories* for episcopacy, as an apostolical institution: their aversion to those sects, who lie under the reproach of having once destroyed their constitution, and who, they imagine, by too indiscreet a zeal for reformation have defaced the primitive model of the church: next, their veneration for monarchical government in the common course of succession, and their hatred to republican schemes: these, I say, are principles which not only the nonjuring zealots profess, but even papists themselves fall readily in with. And every extreme here mentioned, flings a general scandal upon the whole body it pretends to adhere to.

But surely no man whatsoever ought in justice or good manners to be charged with principles he actually disowns, unless his practices do openly, and without the least room for doubt, contradict his profession: not upon small surmises, or because he has the misfortune to have ill men sometimes agree with him in a few general sentiments. However, though the extremes of *whig* and *tory* seem, with little justice, to have drawn religion into their controversies, wherein they have small concern, yet they both have borrowed one leading principle from the abuse of it, which is, to have built their several systems of political faith, not upon enquiries after truth, but upon opposition to each other, upon injurious appellations, charging their adversaries with horrid opinions,

nions, and then reproaching them for the want of charity; *et neuter falso.*

In order to remove these prejudices, I have thought nothing could be more effectual, than to describe the sentiments of a *church of England man* with respect to *religion* and *government*. This I shall endeavour to do in such a *manner*, as may not be liable to the least objection from either party, and which I am confident would be assented to by great numbers in both, if they were not misled to those mutual misrepresentations by such motives, as they would be ashamed to own.

I shall begin with *religion*.

And here, though it makes an odd sound, yet it is necessary to say, that whoever professeth himself a member of the church of *England*, ought to believe a God, and his providence, together with revealed religion, and the divinity of *Christ*. For besides those many thousands, who (to speak in the phrase of divines) do practically deny all this by the immorality of their lives, there is no small number, who in their conversation and writings directly, or by consequence, endeavour to overthrow it: yet all these place themselves in the list of the national church, though at the same time (as it is highly reasonable) they are great sticklers for liberty of conscience.

To enter upon particulars: a *church of England man* has a true veneration for the scheme established among us of ecclesiastick government; and though he will not determine whether episcopacy be of divine right, he is sure it is most agreeable to primitive institution, fittest of all others for preserving order and purity, and under its present regulations best calculated for our civil state: he should therefore think the abolishment of that order among us would prove a mighty scandal and corruption to our faith, and manifestly dangerous to our monarchy; nay, he would defend it by arms against all the powers on earth, except our own

legislature ; in which case he would submit as to a general calamity, a dearth, or a pestilence.

As to rites and ceremonies, and forms of prayer ; he allows there might be some useful alterations, and more, which in the prospect of uniting christians might be very supportable, as things declared in their own nature indifferent ; to which he therefore would readily comply, if the *clergy*, or (though this be not so fair a method) if the *legislature* should direct : yet at the same time he cannot altogether blame the former for their unwillingness to consent to any alteration, which, beside the trouble, and perhaps disgrace, would certainly never produce the good effects intended by it. The only condition, that could make it prudent and just for the clergy to comply in altering the ceremonial, or any other indifferent part, would be a firm resolution in the legislature to interpose, by some strict and effectual laws, to prevent the rising and spreading of new sects, how plausible soever, for the future ; else there must never be an end : and it would be to act like a man, who should pull down and change the ornaments of his house in compliance to every one, who was disposed to find fault as he passed by ; which, besides the perpetual trouble and expence, would very much damage, and perhaps in time destroy the building. Sects in a state seem only tolerated with any reason, because they are already spread ; and because it would not be agreeable with so mild a government, or so pure a religion as ours, to use violent methods against great numbers of *mistaken* people, while they do not manifestly endanger the constitution of either. But the greatest advocates for general liberty of conscience will allow, that they ought to be checked in their beginnings, if they will allow them to be an evil at all, or, which is the same thing, if they will only grant, it were better for the peace of the state, that there should be none. But while the clergy consider the natural temper of mankind in general, or of our own country in particular, what assurances can they have, that

that any compliances they shall make, will remove the evil of dissent, while the liberty still continues of professing whatever new opinions we please? Or how can it be imagined, that the body of dissenting teachers, who must be all undone by such a revolution, will not cast about for some new objections to withhold their flocks, and draw in fresh profelytes by some further innovations or refinements.

Upon these reasons he is for tolerating such different forms in religious worship as are already admitted, but by no means for leaving it in the power of those, who are tolerated, to advance their own models upon the ruin of what is already established; which it is natural for all sects to desire, and which they cannot be justified by any consistent principles if they do not endeavour; and yet, which they cannot succeed in without the utmost danger to the publick peace.

To prevent these inconveniences, he thinks it highly just, that all rewards of trust, profit, or dignity, which the state leaves in the disposal of the administration, should be given only to those, whose principles direct them to preserve the constitution in all its parts. In the late affair of *occasional conformity*, the general argument of those who were against it, was not, to deny it an evil in itself, but that the remedy proposed was violent, untimely, and improper, which is the bishop of *Salisbury's* * opinion in the speech he made and published against the bill: but however just their fears or complaints might have been upon that score, he thinks it a little too gross and precipitate to employ their writers already in arguments for repealing the sacramental test, upon no wiser a maxim, than that no man should, on the account of conscience, be deprived the liberty of serving his country; a to-pick which may be equally applied to admit *Papists, Atheists, Mahometans, Heathens, and Jews*. If the church wants mem-

* Dr. Burnet.

bers of its own to employ in the service of the publick, or be so unhappily contrived, as to exclude from its communion such persons, who are likeliest to have great abilities, it is time it should be altered and reduced into some more perfect, or at least more popular form: but in the mean while it is not altogether improbable, that when those, who dislike the constitution, are so very zealous in their offers for the service of their country, they are not wholly unmindful of their party, or of themselves.

The *Dutch*, whose practice is so often quoted to prove and celebrate the great advantages of a general liberty of conscience, have yet a national religion professed by all who bear office among them: but why should they be a precedent for us either in religion or government? our country differs from theirs, as well in situation, soil, and productions of nature, as in the genius and complection of inhabitants. They are a commonwealth founded on a sudden, by a desperate attempt in a desperate condition, not formed or digested into a regular system by mature thought and reason, but huddled up under the pressure of sudden exigencies; calculated for no long duration, and hitherto subsisting by accident in the midst of contending powers, who cannot yet agree about sharing it amongst them. These difficulties do indeed preserve them from any great corruptions, which their crazy constitution would extremely subject them to in a long peace. That confluence of people in a persecuting age to a place of refuge nearest at hand, put them upon the necessity of trade, to which they wisely gave all ease and encouragement: and if we could think fit to imitate them in this last particular, there would need no more to invite foreigners among us; who seem to think no farther than how to secure their property and conscience, without projecting any share in that government which gives them protection, or calling it *persecution*, if it be denied them. But, I speak it for the honour of our administration, that although our sects are not so numerous as those in *Holland*, which I presume
is

is not our *fault*, and I hope is not our *misfortune*, we much excel them and all *Christendom* besides in our indulgence to tender consciences †. One single compliance with the national form of receiving the sacrament, is all we require to qualify any sectary among us for the greatest employments in the state, after which he is at liberty to rejoin his own assemblies for the rest of his life. Besides, I will suppose any of the numerous sects in *Holland* to have so far prevailed, as to have raised a civil war, destroyed their government and religion, and put their *administrators* to death; after which I will suppose the people to have recovered all again, and to have settled on their old foundation. Then I would put a query, whether that sect, which was the unhappy instrument of all this confusion, could reasonably expect to be entrusted for the future with the greatest employments, or indeed to be hardly tolerated among them?

To go on with the sentiments of a *church of England man*: he does not see how that mighty passion for the church, which some men pretend, can well consist with those indignities and that contempt they bestow on the persons of the clergy. It is a strange mark whereby to distinguish *high-church men*, that they are such, who imagine the clergy can never be too *low*. He thinks the maxim these gentlemen are so fond of, that they are for an humble clergy, is a very good one: and so is he, and for an humble laity too, since humility is a virtue, that perhaps equally befits and adorns every station of life.

But then, if the scribblers on the other side freely speak the sentiments of their party, a divine of the church of *England* cannot look for much better quarter from thence. You shall observe nothing more frequent in their weekly papers, than a way of affecting to confound the terms of *clergy* and *high-church*, of applying both indifferently, and then loading the latter with all the

† When this was written, there was no law against occasional conformity.

calumny they can invent. They will tell you, they honour a clergyman; but talk at the same time, as if there were not three in the kingdom, who could fall in with their definition. After the like manner they insult the *universities* as poisoned fountains, and corrupters of youth.

Now it seems clear to me, that the *whigs* might easily have procured and maintained a majority among the clergy, and perhaps in the universities, if they had not too much encouraged or connived at this intemperance of speech and virulence of pen, in the worst and most prostitute of their party; among whom there hath been, for some years past, such a perpetual clamour against the ambition, the implacable temper, and the covetousness of the *priesthood*: such a cant of *high-church*, and persecution, and being *priest-ridden*, so many reproaches about *narrow principles*, or *terms of communion*: then such scandalous reflections on the *universities*, for infecting the youth of the nation with arbitrary and *jacobite* principles, that it was natural for those, who had the care of religion and education, to apprehend some general design of altering the constitution of both. And all this was the more extraordinary, because it could not easily be forgot, that whatever opposition was made to the usurpations of king *James*, proceeded altogether from the church of *England*, and chiefly from the *clergy*, and one of the *universities*. For, if it were of any use to recal matters of fact, what is more notorious than that prince's applying himself first to the church of *England*; and upon their refusal to fall in with his measures, making the like advances to the *dissenters* of all kinds, who readily and almost universally complied with him, affecting, in their numerous addresses and pamphlets, the style of *our brethren the Roman catholicks*; whose interests they put on the same foot with their own: and some of *Cromwell's* officers took posts in the army raised against the prince of *Orange*. These proceedings of theirs they can only extenuate by urging the provocations they had met from the church in king
Charles's

Charles's reign; which, though perhaps excusable upon the score of human infirmity, are not by any means a plea of merit equal to the constancy and sufferings of the bishops and clergy, or of the head and fellows of *Magdalen college*, that furnished the prince of *Orange's* declaration with such powerful arguments to justify and promote the *revolution*.

Therefore a *church of England man* abhors the humour of the age, in delighting to fling scandals upon the clergy in general; which besides the disgrace to the *reformation*, and to religion itself, cast an ignominy upon the kingdom, that it doth not deserve. We have no better materials to compound the priesthood of, than the mass of mankind, which corrupted, as it is, those who receive orders must have some vices to leave behind them when they enter into the church, and if a few do still adhere, it is no wonder, but rather a great one that they are no worse. Therefore he cannot think *ambition*, or *love of power*, more justly laid to their charge than to other men, because that would be to make religion itself, or at least the best constitution of *church-government*, answerable for the errors and depravity of human nature.

Within these last two hundred years, all sorts of temporal power have been wrested from the clergy, and much of their ecclesiastick, the reason or justice of which proceeding I shall not examine; but that the remedies were a little too violent, with respect to their *possessions*, the legislature hath lately confessed by the remission of their *first fruits*. Neither do the common libellers deny this, who, in their invectives, only tax the church with an insatiable desire of power and wealth, (equally common to all bodies of men, as well as individuals) but thank God, that the laws have deprived them of both. However, it is worth observing the justice of parties; the sects among us are apt to complain, and think it hard usage to be reproached now after fifty years, for overturning the state, for the murder of a king,
and

and the indignity of an usurpation ; yet these very men, and their partisans, are continually reproaching the clergy, and laying to their charge the pride, the avarice, the luxury, the ignorance, and superstition of *popish* times for a thousand years past.

He thinks it a scandal to government, that such an unlimited liberty should be allowed of publishing books against those doctrines in religion, wherein all christians have agreed, much more to connive at such tracts as reject all revelation, and by their consequences often deny the very being of a God. Surely it is not a sufficient attonement for the writers, that they profess much loyalty to the present government, and sprinkle up and down some arguments in favour of the *dissenters* ; that they dispute, as strenuously as they can, for liberty of conscience, and inveigh largely against all ecclesiasticks under the name of *high-church* ; and, in short, under the shelter of some popular principles in politicks and religion, undermine the foundations of all piety and virtue.

As he doth not reckon every *schism* of that damnable nature which some would represent, so he is very far from closing with the new opinion of those who would make it no crime at all ; and argue at a wild rate, that God almighty is delighted with the variety of faith and worship, as he is with the varieties of nature. To such absurdities are men carried by the affectation of *free-thinking*, and *removing the prejudices of education*, under which head they have for some time begun to list *morality* and *religion*. It is certain that before the rebellion in 1642, though the number of *puritans* (as they were then called) were as great as it is with us, and though they affected to follow pastors of that denomination, yet those pastors had episcopal ordination, possessed preferments in the church, and were sometimes promoted to bishopricks themselves. But a breach in the general form of worship was, in those days, reckoned so dangerous and sinful in itself, and so offensive to *Roman catholicks* at home and abroad,

abroad, that it was too unpopular to be attempted ; neither, I believe, was the expedient then found out of maintaining separate pastors out of private purses.

When a *schism* is once spread in a nation, there grows at length a dispute, which are the schismatics. Without entering on the arguments used by both sides among us to fix the guilt on each other, it is certain, that in the sense of the law, the *schism* lies on that side, which opposeth itself to the religion of the state. I leave it among the *divines* to dilate upon the danger of *schism* as a spiritual evil ; but I would consider it only as a temporal one. And I think it clear, that any great separation from the established worship, though to a new one that is more pure and perfect, may be an occasion of endangering the publick peace, because it will compose a body always in reserve, prepared to follow any discontented heads, upon the plausible pretexes of advancing *true religion*, and opposing error, superstition, or idolatry. For this reason *Plato* lays it down as a maxim, that *men ought to worship the gods according to the laws of the country* ; and he introduces *Socrates*, in his last discourse, utterly disowning the crime laid to his charge, of *teaching new divinities* or methods of worship. Thus the poor *Hugonots* of *France* were engaged in a civil war by the specious pretences of some, who, under the guise of religion, sacrificed so many thousand lives to their own ambition and revenge. Thus was the whole body of *puritans* in *England* drawn to be instruments, or abettors of all manner of villainy, by the artifices of a *few men*, whose * designs from the first, were levelled to destroy the constitution both of religion and government. And thus even in *Holland* itself, where it is pretended that the variety of sects live so amicably together, and in such perfect obedience to the magistrate, it is notorious how a turbulent party joining with the *Arminians*, did, in the memory of our

* Lord Clarendon's history.

fathers, attempt to destroy the liberty of that republick. So that upon the whole, where sects are tolerated in a state, it is fit they should enjoy a full liberty of conscience, and every other privilege of free-born subjects, *to which no power is annexed*. And to preserve their obedience upon all emergencies, a government cannot give them too much ease, nor trust them with too little *power*.

The *clergy* are usually charged with a *persecuting spirit*, which they are said to discover by an implacable hatred to all *dissenters*; and this appears to be more unreasonable, because they suffer less in their interests by a *toleration*, than any of the *conforming laity*: for while the *church* remains in its present form, no dissenter can possibly have any share in its dignities, revenues, or power; whereas, by once receiving the sacrament, he is rendered capable of the highest employments in the state. And it is very possible, that a narrow education, together with a mixture of human infirmity, may help to beget among some of the *clergy in possession* such an aversion and contempt for all *innovators*, as *physicians* are apt to have for *empiricks*; or *lawyers* for *petti-foggers*, or *merchants* for *pedlars*; but since the number of sectaries doth not concern the clergy either in point of interest or conscience, (it being an evil not in their power to remedy) it is more fair and reasonable to suppose their dislike proceeds from the dangers they apprehend to the peace of the commonwealth, in the ruin whereof they must expect to be the first and greatest sufferers.

To conclude this *section*, it must be observed, that there is a very good word, which hath of late suffered much by both parties, I mean *moderation*, which the one side very justly disowns, and the other as unjustly pretends to. Beside what passes every day in conversation, any man who reads the papers published by Mr. *Lesley*, and others of his stamp, must needs conclude, that if this author could make the nation see his adversaries under the colours he paints them in, we have nothing else to do, but rise as one man, and destroy such wretches from the face of the earth.

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On the other side, how shall we excuse the advocates for *moderation*; among whom I could appeal to a hundred papers of universal approbation by the cause they were writ for, which lay such principles to the whole body of the *tories*, as, if they were true, and believed, our next business should in prudence be, to erect gibbets in every parish, and hang them out of the way. But I suppose it is presumed, the common people understand *railery*, or at least *rbetorick*, and will not take *hyperboles* in too literal a sense; which however in some junctures might prove a desperate experiment. And this is *moderation* in the *modern* sense of the word, to which, speaking impartially, the bigots of both parties are *equally* entitled.

S E C T. II.

The sentiments of a church of England man, with respect to government.

WE look upon it as a very just reproach, though we cannot agree where to fix it, that there should be so much violence, and hatred in religious matters among men who agree in all fundamentals, and only differ in some ceremonies, or, at most, mere speculative points. Yet, is not this frequently the case between contending parties in a state? for instance; do not the generality of *whigs* and *tories* among us profess to agree in the same *fundamentals*, their loyalty to the queen, their abjuration of the *pretender*, the settlement of the crown in the protestant line, and a revolution principle? their affection to the church established, with toleration of dissenters? nay, sometimes they go farther, and pass over into each other's principles; the *whigs* become great assertors of the prerogative, and the *tories* of the people's liberty; these crying down almost the whole sett of bishops, and those defending them; so that the differences fairly stated, would be much of a sort with those in religion among us,

and amount to little more than, *who should take place, or go in and out first, or kiss the queen's hand*; and what are these but a few court ceremonies? or, *who should be in the ministry*? and what is that to the body of the nation, but a mere *speculative point*? yet I think it must be allowed, that no religious sects ever carried their mutual averfions to greater heighths than our state-parties have done, who, the more to inflame their passions, have mixed religious and civil animosities together; borrowing one of their appellations from the church, with the addition of *high* and *low*, how little soever their disputes relate to the term, as it is generally understood.

I now proceed to deliver the sentiments of a *church of England man*, with respect to government.

He doth not think the church of *England* so narrowly calculated, that it cannot fall in with any regular species of government; nor doth he think any one regular species of government more acceptable to God than another. The three generally received in the *schools* have all of them their several perfections, and are subject to their several depravations. However, few states are ruined by any defect in their institution, but generally by the corruption of manners, against which the best institution is no longer a security, and without which a very ill one may subsist and flourish: whereof there are two pregnant instances now in *Europe*. The first is the *aristocracy* of *Venice*, which, founded upon the wisest maxims, and digested by a great length of time, hath in our age admitted so many abuses through the degeneracy of the nobles, that the period of its duration seems to approach. The other is the united republicks of the *states-general*, where a vein of temperance, industry, parsimony, and a publick spirit, running through the whole body of the people, hath preserved an infant commonwealth, of an untimely birth and sickly constitution, for above an hundred years, through so many dangers and

and difficulties, as a much more healthy one could never have struggled against without those advantages.

Where security of person and property are preserved by laws, which none but the *whole* can repeal, there the great ends of government are provided for, whether the administration be in the hands of *one*, or of *many*. Where any one *person* or *body* of men, who do not represent the *whole*, seize into their hands the power in the last resort, there is properly no longer a government, but what *Aristotle* and his followers call the *abuse* and *corruption* of one. This distinction excludes arbitrary power, in whatever numbers; which notwithstanding all that *Hobbes*, *Filmer*, and others, have said to its advantage, I look upon as a greater evil than *anarchy* itself, as much as a *savage* is in a happier state of life, than a *slave* at the oar.

It is reckoned ill manners, as well as unreasonable, for men to quarrel upon difference in opinion; because that is usually supposed to be a thing, which no man can help in himself; but this I do not conceive to be an universal infallible maxim, except in those cases where the question is pretty equally disputed among the learned and the wise: where it is otherwise, a man of tolerable reason, some experience, and willing to be instructed, may apprehend he is got into a wrong opinion, though the whole course of his mind and inclination would persuade him to believe it true; he may be convinced that he is in an error, though he does not see where it lies, by the bad effects of it in the common conduct of his life, and by observing those persons, for whose wisdom and goodness he hath the greatest deference, to be of a contrary sentiment. According to *Hobbes's* comparison of *reasoning* with *casting up accounts*, whoever finds a mistake in the *sum total*, must allow himself out, though after repeated trials he may not see in which article he has misreckoned. I will instance in one opinion, which I look upon every man obliged in conscience to quit, or in prudence to conceal; I mean, that whoever argues
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in defence of absolute power in a single person, though he offers the old plausible plea, that *it is his opinion, which he cannot help, unless he be convinced*, ought in all free states to be treated as the common enemy of mankind. Yet this is laid as a heavy charge upon the *clergy* of the two reigns before the *revolution*, who, under the terms of *passive obedience* and *non-resistance*, are said to have preached up the unlimited power of the prince, because they found it a doctrine that pleased the court, and made way for their preferment. And I believe, there may be truth enough in this accusation to convince us, that human frailty will too often interpose itself among persons of the holiest function. However it may be offered in excuse for the clergy, that in the best societies there are some ill members, which a corrupted court and ministry will industriously find out and introduce. Besides, it is manifest, that the greater number of those, who held and preached this doctrine, were misguided by equivocal terms, and by perfect ignorance in the principles of government, which they had not made any part of their study. The question originally put, and as I remember to have heard it disputed in publick schools, was this, *Whether under any pretence whatsoever it may be lawful to resist the supreme magistrate?* which was held in the negative; and this is certainly the right opinion. But many of the clergy and other learned men, deceived by a dubious expression, mistook the *object* to which *passive obedience* was due. By the *supreme magistrate* is properly understood the *legislative* power, which in all governments must be absolute and unlimited. But the word *magistrate* seeming to denote a *single person*, and to express the *executive* power, it came to pass, that the obedience due to the *legislature* was, for want of knowing or considering this easy distinction, misapplied to the *administration*. Neither is it any wonder, that the clergy, or other well-meaning people should fall into this error, which deceived *Hobbes* himself so far, as to be the foundation of all the political mistakes in his books, where he perpetually

ally confounds the *executive* with the *legislative* power, though all well-instituted states have ever placed them in different hands, as may be obvious to those, who know any thing of *Athens*, *Sparta*, *Thebes*, and other republicks of *Greece*, as well as the greater ones of *Carthage* and *Rome*.

Besides it is to be considered, that when these doctrines began to be preached among us, the kingdom had not quite worn out the memory of that horrid *rebellion*, under the consequences of which it had groaned almost twenty years. And a *weak prince*, in conjunction with a succession of most prostitute ministers, began again to dispose the people to new attempts, which it was, no doubt, the clergy's duty to endeavour to prevent, though some of them for want of knowledge in temporal affairs, and others perhaps from a worse principle, proceeded upon a topick, that, strictly followed, would enslave all mankind.

Among other theological arguments made use of in those times in praise of monarchy, and justification of absolute obedience to a prince, there seemed to be one of a singular nature: it was urged, that *heaven* was governed by a *monarch*, who had none to controul his power, but was absolutely obeyed: then it followed, that earthly governments were the more perfect, the nearer they imitated the government in heaven. All which I look upon as the strongest argument against *despotick* power that ever was offered; since no reason can possibly be assigned, why it is best for the world, that God almighty hath such a power, which doth not directly prove that no mortal man should ever have the like.

But though a *church of England man* thinks every species of government equally *lawful*, he does not think them equally *expedient*; or for every country indifferently. There may be something in the climate, naturally disposing men towards one sort of obedience; as it is manifest all over *Asia*, where we never read of any commonwealth, except some small ones on the western
coasts

coasts established by the *Greeks*. There may be a great deal in the situation of a country, and in the present *genius* of the people. It hath been observed, that the temperate climates usually run into moderate governments, and the extremes into despotick power. It is a remark of *Hobbes*, that the youth of *England* are corrupted in their principles of government by reading the authors of *Greece* and *Rome*, who writ under commonwealths. But it might have been more fairly offered for the honour of liberty, that while the rest of the known world was over-run with the arbitrary government of single persons, *arts* and *sciences* took their rise, and flourished, only in those few small territories, where the people were *free*. And though *learning* may continue after *liberty* is lost, as it did in *Rome* for a while upon the foundations laid under the commonwealth, and the particular patronage of some emperors, yet it hardly ever began under a *tyranny* in any nation: because *slavery* is of all things the greatest clog and obstacle to *speculation*. And indeed, arbitrary power is but the first natural step from *anarchy* or the *savage life*; the adjusting *power* and *freedom* being an effect and consequence of maturer thinking: and this is no where so duly regulated as in a limited monarchy: because I believe it may pass for a maxim in state, that *the administration cannot be placed in too few hands*, nor the *legislature in too many*. Now in this material point the constitution of the *English* government far exceeds all others at this time on the earth, to which the present establishment of the *church* doth so happily agree, that, I think, whoever is an enemy to *either*, must of necessity be so to *both*.

He thinks, as our monarchy is constituted, an *hereditary* right is much to be preferred before *election*. Because the government here, especially by some late amendments, is so regularly disposed in all its parts, that it almost *executes* itself. And therefore upon the death of a prince among us, the administration goes on without any rub or interruption. For the same reasons

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we have less to apprehend from the *weakness* or *fury* of our monarchs, who have such wise councils to guide the first, and laws to restrain the other. And therefore this hereditary right should be kept so sacred, as never to break the succession, unless where the preserving it may endanger the constitution; which is not not from any intrinsic merit, or unalienable right in a *particular family*, but to avoid the consequences that usually attend the ambition of competitors, to which elective kingdoms are exposed; and which is the only obstacle to hinder them from arriving at the greatest perfection that government can possibly reach. Hence appears the absurdity of that distinction between a king *de facto*, and one *de jure*, with respect to us. For every *limited* monarch is a king *de jure*, because he governs by the consent of the *whole*, which is authority sufficient to abolish all precedent right. If a king come in by *conquest*, he is no longer a *limited* monarch; if he afterwards consent to limitations, he becomes immediately king *de jure* for the same reason.

The great advocates for *succession*, who affirm it ought not to be violated upon any regard or consideration whatsoever, do insist much upon one argument, that seems to carry little weight. They would have it, that a *crown* is a prince's birth-right, and ought at least to be as well secured to him and his posterity, as the inheritance of any private man; in short, that he has the same title to his kingdom, which every individual has to his property: now the consequence of this doctrine must be, that as a man may find several ways to waste, mispend, or abuse his patrimony, without being answerable to the laws; so a king may in like manner do what he will with *his own*; that is, he may squander and misapply his revenues, and even alienate the crown, without being called to an account by his subjects. They allow such a prince to be guilty indeed of much folly and wickedness, but for these he is *answerable to God*, as every private man must be that is guilty of mismanagement in his own concerns. Now

the folly of this reasoning will best appear, by applying it in a parallel case : should any man argue, that a physician is supposed to understand his own art best ; that the law protects and encourages his profession ; and therefore, although he should manifestly prescribe *poison* to all his patients, whereof they should immediately die, he cannot be justly punished, but is answerable only to God : or should the same be offered in behalf of a divine, who would preach against religion and moral duties : in either of these two cases, every body would find out the sophistry, and presently answer, that although common men are not exactly skilled in the composition or application of medicines, or in prescribing the limits of duty ; yet the difference between *poisons* and *remedies* is easily known by their effects ; and common reason soon distinguishes between *virtue* and *vice* : and it must be necessary to forbid both these the further practice of their professions, because their crimes are not purely personal to the physician or the divine, but destructive to the publick. All which is infinitely stronger in respect to a prince, in whose good or ill conduct the happiness or misery of a whole nation is included ; whereas it is of small consequence to the publick, farther than example, how any private person manageth his property.

But granting that the right of a lineal successor to a crown were upon the same foot with the property of a subject ; still it may at any time be transferred by the legislative power, as other properties frequently are. The supreme power in a state can *do no wrong*, because whatever that doth, is the action of all : and when the *lawyers* apply this maxim to the *king*, they must understand it only in that sense, as he is administrator of the supreme power ; otherwise it is not universally true, but may be controuled in several instances easy to produce.

And these are the topicks we must proceed upon to justify our exclusion of the young *Pretender* in *France* ; that of his suspected birth being merely popular, and therefore not made use of, as I
remem-

remember, since the revolution, in any speech, vote, or proclamation, where there was occasion to mention him.

As to the *abdication* of king *James*, which the advocates on that side look upon to have been forcible and unjust, and consequently void in itself, I think a man may observe every article of the *English* church, without being in much pain about it. It is not unlikely that all doors were laid open for his departure, and perhaps not without the privity of the prince of *Orange*, as reasonably concluding, that the kingdom might better be settled in his absence: but to affirm he had any cause to apprehend the same treatment with his *father*, is an improbable scandal flung upon the nation by a few bigotted *French* scribblers, or the invidious assertion of a ruined party at home in the bitterness of their souls, not one material circumstance agreeing with those in 1648; and the greatest part of the nation having preserved the utmost horror for that ignominious *murder*: but whether his removal were caused by his own *fears*, or other men's *artifices*, it is manifest to me, that supposing the throne to be vacant, which was the foot the nation went upon, the body of the people was thereupon left at liberty to chuse what form of government they pleased, by themselves or their representatives.

The only difficulty of any weight against the proceedings at the revolution, is an obvious objection, to which the writers upon that subject have not yet given a direct or sufficient answer, as if they were in pain at some consequences, which they apprehend those of the contrary opinion might draw from it. I will repeat this objection, as it is was offered me sometime ago with all its advantages by a very pious, learned, and worthy gentleman of the nonjuring-party*.

The force of his argument turned upon this; that the laws made by the supreme power cannot otherwise than by the su-

* Mr. *Nelson*, author of the *Faasts and Fasts of the Church of England*.

preme power be annulled : that this consisting in *England* of a king, lords, and commons, whereof each have a negative voice, no two of them can repeal or enact a law without consent of the third ; much less may any one of them be entirely excluded from its part of the legislature by a *vote* of the other two. That all these maxims were openly violated at the revolution ; where an assembly of the *nobles* and *people*, not summoned by the king's writ (which was an essential part of the constitution) and consequently no lawful meeting, did merely upon their own authority declare the king to have abdicated, the throne vacant, and gave the crown by a vote to a *nephew*, when there were three children to inherit, though by the fundamental laws of the realm, the next heir is immediately to succeed. Neither doth it appear, how a prince's *abdication* can make any other sort of vacancy in the throne, than would be caused by his death, since he cannot abdicate for his children, (who claim their right of succession by act of parliament) otherwise than by his own consent in form to a bill from the two houses.

And this is the difficulty, that seems chiefly to stick with the most reasonable of those, who, from a mere scruple of conscience, refuse to join with us upon the revolution-principle ; but for the rest are, I believe, as far from loving arbitrary government, as any others can be, who are born under a free constitution, and are allowed to have the least share of common good sense.

In this objection there are two questions included : first, whether upon the foot of our constitution, as it stood in the reign of the late king *James*, a king of *England* may be deposed ? The second, is, whether the people of *England*, convened by their own authority, after the king had withdrawn himself in the manner he did, had power to alter the succession.

As for the first, it is a point I shall not presume to determine ; and shall therefore only say, that to any man who holds the negative, I would demand the liberty of putting the case as strongly
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ly as I please. I will suppose a prince limited by laws like ours, yet running into a thousand caprices of cruelty like *Nero* or *Caligula*; I will suppose him to murder his mother and his wife; to commit incest, to ravish matrons, to blow up the senate, and burn his metropolis; openly to renounce God and Christ, and worship the devil: these and the like exorbitances are in the power of a single person to commit, without the advice of a ministry, or assistance of an army. And if such a king, as I have described, cannot be deposed but by his own consent in parliament, I do not well see how he can be *resisted*, or what can be meant by a *limited* monarchy; or what signifies the people's consent in making and repealing laws, if the person who administers hath no tie but conscience, and is answerable to none but God. I desire no stronger proof that an opinion must be false, than to find very great absurdities annexed to it; and there cannot be greater than in the present case; for it is not a bare speculation that kings may run into such enormities as are above-mentioned; the practice may be proved by examples not only drawn from the first *Cæsars*, or later emperors, but many modern princes of *Europe*; such as *Peter the cruel*, *Philip the second of Spain*, *John Basilovits of Muscovy*, and in our own nation, king *John*, *Richard the third*, and *Henry the eighth*. But there cannot be equal absurdities supposed in maintaining the contrary opinion; because it is certain, that princes have it in their power to keep a majority on their side by any tolerable administration, till provoked by continual oppressions; no man indeed can then answer, where the madness of the people will stop.

As to the second part of the objection; whether the people of *England* convened by their own authority, upon king *James's* precipitate departure, had power to alter the succession?

In answer to this, I think it is manifest from the practice of the wisest nations, and who seem to have had the truest notions of freedom, that when a prince was laid aside for male-administration,

nistration, the *nobles* and *people*, if they thought it necessary for the publick weal, did resume the administration of the supreme power, (the power itself having been always in them) and did not only alter the succession, but often the very form of government too; because they believed there was no natural right in one man to govern another, but that all was by institution, force, or consent. Thus, the cities of *Greece*, when they drove out their tyrannical kings, either chose others from a new family, or abolished the kingly government, and became free states. Thus the *Romans*, upon the expulsion of *Tarquin*, found it inconvenient for them to be subject any longer to the pride, the lust, the cruelty and arbitrary will of single persons, and therefore by general consent entirely altered the whole frame of their government. Nor do I find the proceedings of either, in this point, to have been condemned by any historian of the succeeding ages.

But a great deal hath been already said by other writers upon this invidious and beaten subject; therefore I shall let it fall; though the point is commonly mistaken, especially by the *lawyers*; who of all others seem least to understand the nature of government in general; like under-workmen, who are expert enough at making a single wheel in a clock, but are utterly ignorant how to adjust the several parts, or regulate the movements.

To return therefore from this digression: it is a *church of England* man's opinion, that the freedom of a nation consists in an absolute *unlimited legislative power*, wherein the whole body of the people are fairly represented, and in an *executive* duly *limited*; because on this side likewise there may be dangerous degrees, and a very ill extreme. For when two parties in a state are pretty equal in *power*, *pretensions*, *merit* and *virtue*, (for these two last are, with relation to parties and a court, quite different things) it hath been the opinion of the best writers upon government, that a prince ought not in any sort to be under the guidance or influence of either, because he declines by this means
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from his office of presiding over the *whole*, to be the head of a *party*, which, besides the indignity, renders him answerable for all public mismanagements, and the consequences of them; and in whatever state this happens, there must either be a weakness in the prince or ministry, or else the former is too much restrained by the nobles, or those who represent the people.

To conclude: A *church of England man* may with prudence and a good conscience approve the professed principles of one party more than the other, according as he thinks they best promote the good of church and state; but he will never be swayed by passion or interest to advance an opinion, merely because it is *that* of the party he most approves; which one single principle he looks upon as the root of all our civil animosities. To enter into a party, as into an order of *friers*, with so resigned an obedience to superiors, is very unfuitable both with the civil and religious liberties we so zealously assert. Thus the understandings of a whole senate are often enslaved by three or four leaders on each side, who, instead of intending the publick weal, have their hearts wholly set upon ways and means how to get or to keep employments. But to speak more at large, how has this spirit of faction mingled itself with the mass of the people, changed their nature and manners, and the very genius of the nation? broke all the laws of charity, neighbourhood, alliance, and hospitality, destroyed all ties of friendship, and divided families against themselves? and no wonder it should be so, when in order to find out the character of a person, instead of enquiring whether he be a man of virtue, honour, piety, wit, good sense, or learning; the modern question is only, whether he be a *whig* or a *tory*, under which terms all good and ill qualities are included.

Now, because it is a point of difficulty to chuse an exact middle between two ill extremes, it may be worth enquiring in the present case, which of these a wise and good man would rather seem to avoid: taking therefore their own good and ill characters

ters with due abatements and allowances for partiality and passion, I should think that in order to preserve the constitution entire in church and state, whoever hath a true value for both, would be sure to avoid the extremes of *whig* for the sake of the former, and the extremes of *tory* on account of the latter.

I have now said all, that I could think convenient upon so nice a subject, and find I have the ambition common with other reasoners, to wish at least that both parties may think me *in the right*, which would be of some use to those who have any virtue left, but are blindly drawn into the extravagancies of either, upon false representations, to serve the ambition or malice of designing men, without any prospect of their own. But if that is not to be hoped for, my next wish should be, that both might think me *in the wrong*: which I would understand as an ample justification of myself, and a sure ground to believe, that I have proceeded at least with impartiality, and perhaps with truth.

A N

A N
A R G U M E N T
To prove that the ABOLISHING of
C H R I S T I A N I T Y
I N
E N G L A N D

may, as things now stand, be attended with some inconveniencies, and perhaps not produce those many good effects proposed thereby.

Written in the Year 1708.

I Am very sensible, what a weakness and presumption it is, to reason against the general humour and disposition of the world. I remember it was with great justice, and a due regard to the freedom, both of the publick and the press, forbidden upon several penalties to write, or discourse, or lay wagers against the *union*, even before it was confirmed by parliament; because that was looked upon as a design to oppose the current of the people, which besides the folly of it, is a manifest breach of the fundamental law, that makes this majority of opinion the voice of God. In like manner, and for the very same reasons, it may perhaps be neither safe nor prudent to argue against the abolishing of christianity at a juncture, when all parties appear so unanimously determined upon the point, as we cannot but allow from their actions, their discourses, and their writings. However, I know not how, whether from the affectation of singularity, or the perverseness of human nature, but so it unhappily falls out, that I cannot be entirely of this opinion. Nay, though I were sure an order were issued for my immediate prosecution by the attorney-general, I should still confess, that in the present pos-

ture of our affairs at home or abroad I do not yet see the absolute necessity of extirpating the christian religion from among us.

This perhaps may appear too great a paradox even for our wise and paradoxical age to endure; therefore I shall handle it with all tenderness, and with the utmost deference to that great and profound majority, which is of another sentiment.

And yet the curious may please to observe, how much the genius of a nation is liable to alter in half an age: I have heard it affirmed for certain by some very old people, that the contrary opinion was even in their memories as much in vogue as the other is now; and that a project for the abolishing of christianity would then have appeared as singular, and been thought as absurd, as it would be at this time to write or discourse in its defence.

Therefore I freely own, that all appearances are against me. The system of the gospel, after the fate of other systems, is generally antiquated and exploded, and the mass or body of the common people, among whom it seems to have had its latest credit, are now grown as much ashamed of it as their betters; opinions, like fashions, always descending from those of quality to the middle sort, and thence to the vulgar, where at length they are dropped and vanish.

But here I would not be mistaken, and must therefore be so bold as to borrow a distinction from the writers on the other side, when they make a difference between nominal and real *trinitarians*. I hope no reader imagines me so weak to stand up in the defence of real christianity, such as used in primitive times (if we may believe the authors of those ages) to have an influence upon mens belief and actions: to offer at the restoring of that, would indeed be a wild project; it would be to dig up foundations; to destroy at one blow all the wit, and half the learning of the kingdom; to break the entire frame and constitution of things; to ruin trade, extinguish arts and sciences, with the professors of

of them ; in short, to turn our courts, exchanges and shops into desarts ; and would be full as absurd as the proposal of *Horace*, where he advises the *Romans*, all in a body, to leave their city, and seek a new seat in some remote part of the world, by way of cure for the corruption of their manners.

Therefore I think this caution was in itself altogether unnecessary, (which I have inserted only to prevent all possibility of cavilling) since every candid reader will easily understand my discourse to be intended only in defence of nominal christianity, the other having been for some time wholly laid aside by general consent, as utterly inconsistent with our present schemes of wealth and power.

But why we should therefore cast off the name and title of christians, although the general opinion and resolution be so violent for it, I confess I cannot (with submission) apprehend, nor is the consequence necessary. However, since the undertakers propose such wonderful advantages to the nation by this project, and advance many plausible objections against the system of christianity, I shall briefly consider the strength of both, fairly allow them their greatest weight, and offer such answers as I think most reasonable. After which I will beg leave to shew, what inconveniencies may possibly happen by such an innovation in the present posture of our affairs.

First, one great advantage proposed by the abolishing of christianity is, that it would very much enlarge and establish liberty of conscience, that great bulwark of our nation, and of the protestant religion, which is still too much limited by priestcraft, notwithstanding all the good intentions of the legislature, as we have lately found by a severe instance. For it is confidently reported, that two young gentlemen of real hopes, bright wit, and profound judgment, who, upon a thorough examination of causes and effects, and by the mere force of natural abilities, without the least tincture of learning, having made a discovery, that there

was no God, and generously communicating their thoughts for the good of the publick, were some time ago, by an unparalleled severity, and upon I know not what obsolete law, broke for blasphemy. And as it hath been wisely observed, if persecution once begins, no man alive knows how far it may reach, or where it will end.

In answer to all which, with deference to wiser judgments, I think this rather shews the necessity of a nominal religion among us. Great wits love to be free with the highest objects; and if they cannot be allowed a God to revile or renounce, they will speak evil of dignities, abuse the government, and reflect upon the ministry; which I am sure few will deny to be of much more pernicious consequence, according to the saying of *Tiberius*, *deorum offensa diis curæ*. As to the particular fact related, I think it is not fair to argue from one instance, perhaps another cannot be produced: yet (to the comfort of all those who may be apprehensive of persecution) blasphemy we know is freely spoken a million of times in every coffee-house and tavern, or wherever else good company meet. It must be allowed indeed, that to break an *english* free-born officer only for blasphemy, was, to speak the gentlest of such an action, a very high strain of absolute power. Little can be said in excuse for the general; perhaps he was afraid it might give offence to the allies, among whom, for aught we know, it may be the custom of the country to believe a God. But if he argued, as some have done, upon a mistaken principle, that an officer who is guilty of speaking blasphemy, may some time or other proceed so far as to raise a mutiny, the consequence is by no means to be admitted: for surely the commander of an *english* army is like to be but ill obeyed, whose soldiers fear and reverence him as little as they do a Deity.

It is further objected against the gospel system, that it obliges men to the belief of things too difficult for free-thinkers, and such who have shaken off the prejudices that usually cling to a
confined

confined education. To which I answer, that men should be cautious how they raise objections, which reflect upon the wisdom of the nation. Is not every body freely allowed to believe whatever he pleaseth, and to publish his belief to the world whenever he thinks fit, especially if it serves to strengthen the party, which is in the right? Would any indifferent foreigner, who should read the trumpery lately written by * *Asgil*, *Tindal*, *Toland*, *Coward*, and forty more, imagine the gospel to be our rule of faith, and confirmed by parliaments? Does any man either believe, or say he believes, or desire to have it thought that he says he believes one syllable of the matter? And is any man worse received upon that score, or does he find his want of nominal faith a disadvantage to him in the pursuit of any civil or military employment? What if there be an old dormant statute or two against him, are they not now obsolete to a degree, that *Empson* and *Dudley* themselves, if they were now alive, would find it impossible to put them in execution.

It is likewise urged, that there are by computation in this kingdom above ten thousand parsons, whose revenues, added to those of my lords the bishops, would suffice to maintain at least two hundred young gentlemen of wit and pleasure, and free-thinking, enemies to priestcraft, narrow principles, pedantry, and prejudices, who might be an ornament to the court and town: and then again, so great a number of able [bodied] divines might be a recruit to our fleet and armies. This indeed appears to be a consideration of some weight: but then, on the other side, several things deserve to be considered likewise: as first, whether it may not be thought necessary, that in certain tracts of country, like what we call parishes, there should be one man at least of abilities to read and write. Then it seems a wrong com-

* *Asgil* wrote an argument to prove, that man may be translated from hence into eternal life, without passing through death.

Toland published some deistical books.

Tindal's writings were blasphemous and atheistical.

Coward asserted the mortality of the soul, and alledged the seat of it to be in the blood.

putation,

putation, that the revenues of the church throughout this island would be large enough to maintain two hundred young gentlemen, or even half that number, after the present refined way of living, that is, to allow each of them such a rent, as, in the modern form of speech, would make them easy. But still there is in this project a greater mischief behind; and we ought to beware of the woman's folly, who killed the hen, that every morning laid her a golden egg. For, pray what would become of the race of men in the next age, if we had nothing to trust to beside the scrophulous consumptive productions furnished by our men of wit and pleasure, when having squandered away their vigor, health and estates, they are forced, by some disagreeable marriage, to piece up their broken fortunes, and entail rottenness and politeness on their posterity? Now, here are ten thousand persons reduced, by the wise regulations of *Henry* the eighth, to the necessity of a low diet, and moderate exercise, who are the only great restorers of our breed, without which the nation would in an age or two become one great hospital.

Another advantage proposed by the abolishing of christianity is the clear gain of one day in seven, which is now entirely lost, and consequently the kingdom one seventh less considerable in trade, business, and pleasure; besides the loss to the publick of so many stately structures now in the hands of the clergy, which might be converted into play-houses, market-houses, exchanges, common dormitories, and other publick edifices.

I hope I shall be forgiven a hard word, if I call this a perfect cavil. I readily own there hath been an old custom, time out of mind, for people to assemble in the churches every *Sunday*, and that shops are still frequently shut, in order, as it is conceived, to preserve the memory of that antient practice; but how this can prove a hindrance to business or pleasure, is hard to imagine. What if the men of pleasure are forced, one day in the week, to game at home instead of the *chocolate-house*? are not
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the *taverns* and *coffee-houses* open? can there be a more convenient season for taking a dose of physick? are fewer claps got upon *Sundays* than other days? is not that the chief day for traders to sum up the accounts of the week, and for lawyers to prepare their briefs? but I would fain know, how it can be pretended, that the churches are misapplied? where are more appointments and rendezvouses of gallantry? where more care to appear in the foremost box, with greater advantage of dress? where more meetings for business? where more bargains driven of all sorts? and where so many conveniencies or incitements to sleep?

There is one advantage, greater than any of the foregoing, proposed by the abolishing of christianity; that it will utterly extinguish parties among us, by removing those factious distinctions of high and low-church, of *whig* and *tory*, *presbyterian* and *church of England*, which are now so many grievous clogs upon publick proceedings, and are apt to dispose men to prefer the gratifying themselves or depressing their adversaries, before the most important interest of the state.

I confess, if it were certain, that so great an advantage would redound to the nation by this expedient, I would submit, and be silent: but will any man say, that if the words *whoring*, *drinking*, *cheating*, *lying*, *stealing*, were by act of parliament ejected out of the *English* tongue and dictionaries, we should all awake next morning chaste and temperate, honest and just, and lovers of truth. Is this a fair consequence? or if the physicians would forbid us to pronounce the words *pox*, *gout*, *rheumatism* and *stone*, would that expedient serve like so many *talismans* to destroy the diseases themselves? are party and faction rooted in men's hearts no deeper than phrases borrowed from religion, or founded upon no firmer principles? and is our language so poor, that we cannot find other terms to express them? are envy, pride, avarice, and ambition such ill nomenclators, that they cannot furnish appellations for their owners? will not *Heydukes* and *malukes*,

malukes, mandarins, and patshaws, or any other words formed at pleasure, serve to distinguish those who are in the ministry from others, who would be in it if they could? what, for instance, is easier than to vary the form of speech, and instead of the word church, make it a question in politicks, whether the monument be in danger? because religion was nearest at hand to furnish a few convenient phrases, is our invention so barren, we can find no other? suppose, for argument sake, that the *tories* favoured *Margarita* †, the *whigs* Mrs. *Tofts*, and the *Trimmers* *Valentini*, would not *Margaritians, Toftians, and Valentinians* be very tolerable marks of distinction? the *Prasini* and *Veniti*, two most virulent factions in *Italy*, began (if I remember right) by a distinction of colours in ribbands: and we might contend with as good a grace about the dignity of the *blue* and the *green*, which would serve as properly to divide the court, the parliament, and the kingdom between them, as any terms of art whatsoever borrowed from religion. And therefore I think there is little force in this objection against christianity, or prospect of so great an advantage as is proposed in the abolishing of it.

It is again objected, as a very absurd ridiculous custom, that a sett of men should be suffered, much less employed and hired, to bawl one day in seven against the lawfulness of those methods most in use towards the pursuit of greatness, riches, and pleasure, which are the constant practice of all men alive on the other six. But this objection is, I think, a little unworthy so refined an age as ours. Let us argue this matter calmly: I appeal to the breast of any polite free-thinker, whether, in the pursuit of gratifying a predominant passion, he hath not always felt a wonderful incitement by reflecting, it was a thing forbidden: and therefore we see, in order to cultivate this taste the wisdom of the nation hath taken special care, that the ladies should be furnished with prohi-

† Italian fingers then in vogue: Marguarita was afterwards married to Dr. Pepusche.

bited filks, and the men with prohibited wine. And indeed it were to be wished, that some other prohibitions were promoted, in order to improve the pleasures of the town; which for want of such expedients begin already, as I am told, to flag and grow languid, giving way daily to cruel inroads from the spleen.

It is likewise proposed as a great advantage to the publick, that if we once discard the system of the gospel, all religion will of course be banished for ever, and consequently along with it those grievous prejudices of education, which, under the names of virtue, conscience, honour, justice, and the like, are so apt to disturb the peace of human minds, and the notions whereof are so hard to be eradicated by right reason or free-thinking, sometimes during the whole course of our lives.

Here first I observe, how difficult it is to get rid of a phrase, which the world is once grown fond of, though the occasion that first produced it be entirely taken away. For several years past, if a man had but an ill-favoured nose, the deep thinkers of the age would some way or other contrive to impute the cause to the prejudice of his education. From this fountain are said to be derived all our foolish notions of justice, piety, love of our country; all our opinions of God or a future state, heaven, hell, and the like: and there might formerly perhaps have been some pretence for this charge. But so effectual care hath been since taken to remove those prejudices, by an entire change in the methods of education, that (with honour I mention it to our polite innovators) the young gentlemen, who are now on the scene, seem to have not the least tincture left of those infusions, or string of those weeds; and by consequence the reason for abolishing nominal christianity upon that pretext, is wholly ceased.

For the rest, it may perhaps admit a controversy, whether the banishing all notions of religion whatsoever would be convenient for the vulgar. Not that I am in the least of opinion with those, who hold religion to have been the invention of po-

liticians to keep the lower part of the world in awe by the fear of invifible powers; unlefs mankind were then very different from what it is now: for I look upon the mafs or body of our people here in *England* to be as free-thinkers, that is to fay, as ftaunch unbelievers, as any of the higheft rank. But I conceive fome fcattered notions about a fuperior power to be of fingular ufe for the common people, as furnifhing excellent materials to keep children quiet when they grow peevifh, and providing topicks of amufement in a tedious winter-night.

Laftly, It is propofed, as a fingular advantage, that the abolifhing of chriftianity will very much contribute to the uniting of *proteftants*, by enlarging the terms of communion, fo as to take in all forts of *difsenters*, who are now fhut out of the pale upon account of a few ceremonies, which all fides confefs to be things indifferent: that this alone will effectually answer the great ends of a fcheme for comprehension by opening a large noble gate, at which all bodies may enter; whereas the chaffering with *difsenters*, and dodging about this or the other ceremony, is but like opening a few wickets, and leaving them at jar, by which no more than one can get in at a time, and that not without ftrooping, and fideling, and fqueezing his body.

To all this I answer, that there is one darling inclination of mankind, which ufually affects to be a retainer to religion, though fhe be neither its parent, its godmother, or its friend; I mean the fpirit of oppofition, that lived long before chriftianity, and can eafily fubfift without it. Let us, for instance, examine wherein the oppofition of feftaries among us confifts; we fhall find chriftianity to have no fhare in it at all. Does the gofpel any where prefcribe a ftarched fqueezed countenance, a ftiff formal gait, a fingularity of manners and habit, or any affected modes of fpeech different from the reasonable part of mankind? Yet, if chriftianity did not lend its name to ftand in the gap, and to employ or divert thefe humours, they muft of neceffity be fpent
in

in contraventions to the laws of the land, and disturbance of the publick peace. There is a portion of enthusiasm assigned to every nation, which if it hath not proper objects to work on, will burst out, and set all in a flame. If the quiet of a state can be bought by only flinging men a few ceremonies to devour, it is a purchase no wise man would refuse. Let the mastiffs amuse themselves about a sheep's skin stuffed with hay, provided it will keep them from worrying the flock. The institution of convents abroad seems in one point a strain of great wisdom, there being few irregularities in human passions, that may not have recourse to vent themselves in some of those orders, which are so many retreats for the speculative, the melancholy, the proud, the silent, the politick, and the morose, to spend themselves, and evaporate the noxious particles; for each of whom we in this island are forced to provide a several sect of religion, to keep them quiet; and whenever christianity shall be abolished, the legislature must find some other expedient to employ and entertain them. For what imports it how large a gate you open, if there will be always left a number, who place a pride and a merit in refusing to enter?

Having thus considered the most important objections against christianity, and the chief advantages proposed by the abolishing thereof; I shall now with equal deference and submission to wiser judgments, as before, proceed to mention a few inconveniencies that may happen, if the gospel should be repealed, which perhaps the projectors may not have sufficiently considered.

And first, I am very sensible how much the gentlemen of wit and pleasure are apt to murmur, and be choaked at the sight of so many daggled-tail parsons, who happen to fall in their way, and offend their eyes; but at the same time these wise reformers do not consider, what an advantage and felicity it is for great wits to be always provided with objects of scorn and contempt,

in order to exercise and improve their talents, and divert their spleen from falling on each other, or on themselves, especially when all this may be done without the least imaginable danger to their persons.

And to urge another argument of a parallel nature : if christianity were once abolished, how could the free-thinkers, the strong reasoners, and the men of profound learning, be able to find another subject so calculated in all points whereon to display their abilities? what wonderful productions of wit should we be deprived of from those, whose genius by continual practice hath been wholly turned upon raillery and invectives against religion, and would therefore never be able to shine or distinguish themselves upon any other subject? we are daily complaining of the great decline of wit among us, and would we take away the greatest, perhaps the only topick we have left? who would ever have suspected *Asgil* for a wit, or *Toland* for a philosopher, if the inexhaustible stock of christianity had not been at hand to provide them with materials? what other subject through all art or nature could have produced *Tindal* for a profound author, or furnished him with readers? it is the wise choice of the subject that alone adorns and distinguishes the writer. For had an hundred such pens as these been employed on the side of religion, they would have immediately sunk into silence and oblivion.

Nor do I think it wholly groundless, or my fears altogether imaginary, that the abolishing of christianity may perhaps bring the church in danger, or at least put the senate to the trouble of another securing vote. I desire I may not be mistaken; I am far from presuming to affirm or think that the church is in danger at present, or as things now stand; but we know not how soon it may be so, when the christian religion is repealed. As plausible as this project seems, there may be a dangerous design lurking under it. Nothing can be more notorious, than that the *atheists*, *deists*, *socinians*, *anti-trinitarians*, and other sub-

sub-divisions of free-thinkers, are persons of little zeal for the present ecclesiastical establishment: their declared opinion is for repealing the sacramental test; they are very indifferent with regard to ceremonies; nor do they hold the *jus divinum* of episcopacy: therefore this may be intended as one politick step towards altering the constitution of the church established, and setting up *presbytery* in the stead, which I leave to be further considered by those at the helm.

In the last place, I think nothing can be more plain, than that by this expedient, we shall run into the evil we chiefly pretend to avoid: and that the abolishment of the *christian* religion will be the readiest course we can take to introduce popery. And I am the more inclined to this opinion, because we know it hath been the constant practice of the *jesuits* to send over emissaries with instructions to personate themselves members of the several prevailing sects among us. So it is recorded, that they have at fundry times appeared in the guise of *presbyterians*, *anabaptists*, *independents*, and *quakers*, according as any of these were most in credit; so, since the fashion hath been taken up of exploding religion, the *popish* missionaries have not been wanting to mix with the free-thinkers; among whom *Toland*, the great oracle of the *anti-christians*, is an *Irish* priest, the son of an *Irish* priest; and the most learned and ingenious author of a book called the *rights of the christian church*, was in a proper juncture reconciled to the *Romish* faith, whose true son, as appears by a hundred passages in his treatise, he still continues. Perhaps I could add some others to the number; but the fact is beyond dispute, and the reasoning they proceed by is right: for supposing christianity to be extinguished, the people will never be at ease till they find out some other method of worship; which will as infallibly produce superstition, as superstition will end in *popery*.

And therefore, if notwithstanding all I have said, it still be thought necessary to have a bill brought in for repealing christianity,

stianity, I would humbly offer an amendment, that instead of the word christianity may be put religion in general, which I conceive will much better answer all the good ends proposed by the projectors of it. For as long as we leave in being a God and his providence, with all the necessary consequences, which curious and inquisitive men will be apt to draw from such premises, we do not strike at the root of the evil, though we should ever so effectually annihilate the present scheme of the gospel: for, of what use is freedom of thought, if it will not produce freedom of action, which is the sole end, how remote soever in appearance, of all objections against christianity; and therefore, the free-thinkers consider it as a sort of edifice, wherein all the parts have such a mutual dependance on each other, that if you happen to pull out one single nail, the whole fabrick must fall to the ground. This was happily expressed by him, who had heard of a text brought for proof of the trinity, which in an ancient manuscript was differently read; he thereupon immediately took the hint, and by a sudden deduction of a long * *sorites* most logically concluded: why, if it be as you say, I may safely whore and drink on, and defy the parson. From which, and many the like instances easy to be produced, I think nothing can be more manifest, than that the quarrel is not against any particular points of hard digestion in the christian system, but against religion in general, which, by laying restraints on human nature, is supposed the great enemy to the freedom of thought and action.

Upon the whole, if it shall still be thought for the benefit of church and state, that christianity be abolished, I conceive however, it may be more convenient to defer the execution to a time of peace, and not venture in this conjuncture to disoblige our allies, who, as it falls out, are all christians, and many of them, by the prejudices of their education, so bigotted, as to

* A *sorites* differs from a syllogism, in that it takes only the minor proposition. An example of this figure may be seen in *John Bull*, Vol. III. p. 96.

place a sort of pride in the appellation. If upon being rejected by them, we are to trust to an alliance with the *Turk*, we shall find ourselves much deceived: for, as he is too remote, and generally engaged in war with the *Persian* emperor, so his people would be more scandalized at our infidelity, than our christian neighbours. For the *Turks* are not only strict observers of religious worship, but, what is worse, believe a God; which is more than is required of us, even while we preserve the name of christians.

To conclude: whatever some may think of the great advantages to trade by this favourite scheme, I do very much apprehend, that in six months time after the act is past for the extirpation of the gospel, the *Bank* and *East-India* stock may fall at least one *per cent*. And since that is fifty times more than ever the wisdom of our age thought fit to venture for the preservation of christianity, there is no reason we should be at so great a loss, merely for the sake of destroying it.

A P R O -

A
P R O J E C T
FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF RELIGION
AND THE
REFORMATION OF MANNERS.

BY A PERSON OF QUALITY.

Written in the Year 1709.

To the countess of BERKLEY *.

MADAM,

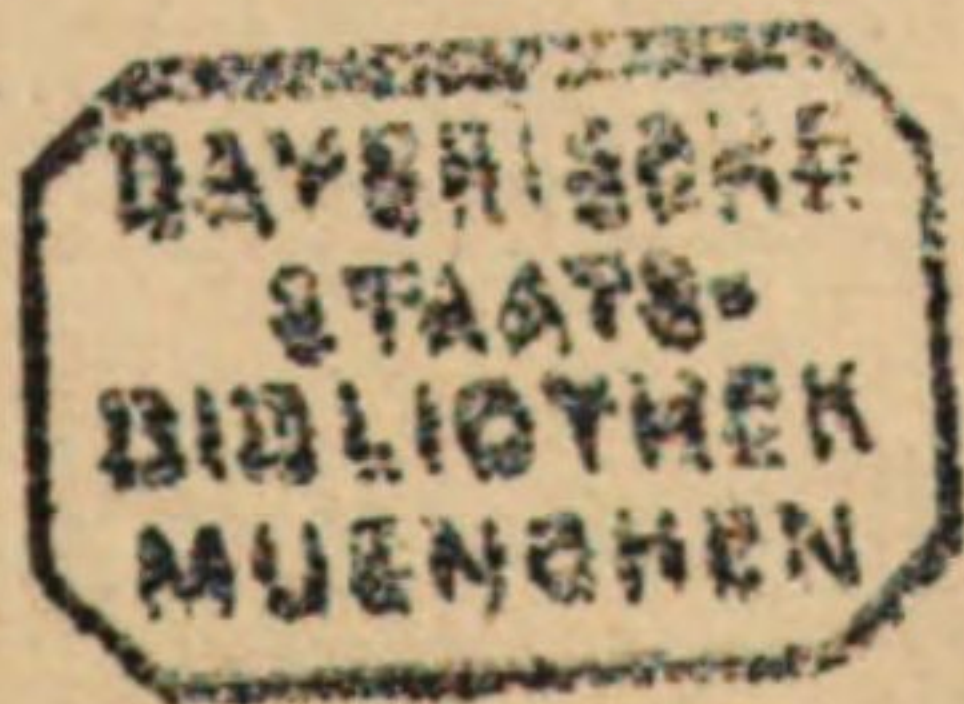
MY intention in prefixing your ladyship's name, is not, after the common form, to desire your protection of the following papers; which I take to be a very unreasonable request; since by being inscribed to your ladyship, though without your knowledge, and from a concealed hand, you cannot recommend them without some suspicion of partiality. My real design is, I confess, the very same I have often detested in most dedications; that of publishing your praises to the world; not upon the subject of your noble birth, for I know others as noble; or of the greatness of your fortune, for I know others far greater; or of that beautiful race (the images of their parents) which calls you mother; for even this may perhaps have been equalled in some other age or country. Besides, none of these advantages do de-

* This excellent lady, was *Elizabeth*, the daughter of *Baptist Noel*, viscount *Campden*, and sister to *Edward* earl of *Gainsborough*.

rive any accomplishments to the owners, but serve at best only to adorn what they really possess. What I intend, is your piety, truth, good sense, and good nature, affability, and charity; wherein I wish your ladyship had many equals, or any superiors; and I wish I could say, I knew them too, for then your ladyship might have had a chance to escape this address. In the mean time, I think it highly necessary, for the interest of virtue and religion, that the whole kingdom should be informed in some parts of your character: for instance, that the easiest and politest conversation, joined with the truest piety, may be observed in your ladyship, in as great perfection as they were ever seen apart in any other persons. That by your prudence and management under several disadvantages, you have preserved the lustre of that most noble family, into which you are grafted, and which the unmeasurable profusion of ancestors for many generations had too much eclipsed. Then, how happily you perform every office of life, to which providence hath called you: in the education of those two incomparable daughters, whose conduct is so universally admired; in every duty of a prudent, complying, affectionate wife; in that care which descends to the meanest of your domesticks; and lastly, in that endless bounty to the poor, and discretion where to distribute it. I insist on my opinion, that it is of importance for the publick to know this and a great deal more of your ladyship; yet whoever goes about to inform them, shall, instead of finding credit, perhaps be censured for a flatterer. To avoid so usual a reproach, I declare this to be no dedication, but merely an introduction to a proposal for the advancement of religion and morals, by tracing, however imperfectly, some few lineaments in the character of a lady, who hath spent all her life in the practice and promotion of both.

AMONG all the schemes offered to the publick in this projecting age, I have observed, with some displeasure, that there

VOL. II. O have



have never been any for the improvement of religion and morals : which, besides the piety of the design from the consequence of such a reformation in a future life, would be the best natural means for advancing the publick felicity of the state, as well as the present happiness of every individual. For, as much as faith and morality are declined among us, I am altogether confident, they might in a short time, and with no very great trouble, be raised to as high a perfection as numbers are capable of receiving. Indeed, the method is so easy and obvious, and some present opportunities so good, that in order to have this project reduced to practice, there seems to want nothing more than to put those in mind, who by their honour, duty, and interest, are chiefly concerned.

But because it is idle to propose remedies, before we are assured of the disease, or to be in fear till we are convinced of the danger ; I shall first shew in general, that the nation is extremely corrupted in religion and morals ; and then I will offer a short scheme for the reformation of both.

As to the first, I know it is reckoned but a form of speech, when divines complain of the wickedness of the age : however, I believe upon a fair comparison with other times and countries, it would be found an undoubted truth.

For first, to deliver nothing but plain matter of fact without exaggeration or satire, I suppose it will be granted, that hardly one in an hundred among our people of quality or gentry appears to act by any principle of religion ; that great numbers of them do entirely discard it, and are ready to own their disbelief of all revelation in ordinary discourse. Nor is the case much better among the vulgar, especially in great towns, where the profaneness and ignorance of handicraftsmen, small traders, servants, and the like, are to a degree very hard to be imagined greater. Then, it is observed abroad, that no race of mortals hath so little sense of religion as the *English* soldiers ; to confirm which, I have

have been often told by great officers of the army, that in the whole compass of their acquaintance they could not recollect three of their profession, who seemed to regard or believe one syllable of the gospel: and the same at least may be affirmed of the fleet. The consequences of all which upon the actions of men are equally manifest. They never go about, as in former times, to hide or palliate their vices, but expose them freely to view, like any other common occurrences of life, without the least reproach from the world or themselves. For instance, any man will tell you he intends to be drunk this evening, or was so last night, with as little ceremony or scruple, as he would tell you the time of the day. He will let you know he is going to a wench, or that he has got a clap, with as much indifferency, as he would a piece of publick news. He will swear, curse, or blaspheme, without the least passion or provocation. And though all regard for reputation is not quite laid aside in the other sex, it is however at so low an ebb, that very few among them seem to think virtue and conduct of any necessity for preserving it. If this be not so, how comes it to pass, that women of tainted reputations find the same countenance and reception in all publick places with those of the nicest virtue, who pay and receive visits from them without any manner of scruple; which proceeding, as it is not very old among us, so I take it to be of most pernicious consequence: it looks like a sort of compounding between virtue and vice, as if a woman were allowed to be vicious, provided she be not a profligate; as if there were a certain point, where gallantry ends, and infamy begins; or that an hundred criminal amours were not as pardonable as half a score.

Besides those corruptions already mentioned, it would be endless to enumerate such as arise from the excess of play or gaming: the cheats, the quarrels, the oaths, and blasphemies, among the men; among the women, the neglect of household affairs, the unlimited freedoms, the undecent passion, and lastly,

the known inlet to all lewdness, when after an ill run the *person* must answer the defects of the *purse*: the rule on such occasions holding true in play, as it does in law; *quod non habet in crumena, luat in corpore*.

But all these are trifles in comparison, if we step into other scenes, and consider the fraud and cozenage of trading men and shop-keepers; that insatiable gulph of injustice and oppression, the *law*; the open traffick for all civil and military employments (I wish it rested there *) without the least regard to merit or qualifications; the corrupt management of men in office; the many detestable abuses in chusing those, who represent the people; with the management of interests and factions among the representatives: to which I must be bold to add, the ignorance of some of the lower clergy; the mean servile temper of others; the pert pragmatistical demeanour of several young stagers in divinity, upon their first producing themselves into the world; with many other circumstances needless, or rather invidious to mention; which falling in with the corruptions already related, have, however unjustly, almost rendered the whole order contemptible.

This is a short view of the general depravities among us, without entering into particulars, which would be an endless labour. Now, as universal and deep-rooted as these appear to be, I am utterly deceived, if an effectual remedy might not be applied to most of them; neither am I at present upon a wild speculative project, but such a one as may be easily put in execution.

For, while the prerogative of giving all employments continues in the crown, either immediately, or by subordination, it is in the power of the *prince* to make piety and virtue become the fashion of the age, if at the same time he would make them necessary qualifications for favour and preferment.

It is clear from present experience, that the bare example of

* Perhaps the author intended to intimate that it extended to ecclesiastical.

the best prince will not have any mighty influence, where the age is very corrupt. For, when was there ever a better prince on the throne than the present queen? I do not talk of her talent for government, her love of the people, or any other qualities that are purely regal; but her piety, charity, temperance, conjugal love, and whatever other virtues do best adorn a private life; wherein, without question or flattery, she hath no superior: yet neither will it be satire or peevish invective to affirm, that infidelity and vice are not much diminished since her coming to the crown, nor will, in probability, till more effectual remedies be provided.

Thus human nature seems to lie under the disadvantage, that the example alone of a vicious prince will in time corrupt an age; but the example of a good one will not be sufficient to reform it without further endeavours. Princes must therefore supply this defect by a vigorous exercise of that authority, which the law has left them, by making it every man's interest and honour to cultivate religion and virtue, by rendering vice a disgrace, and the certain ruin to preferment or pretensions: all which they should first attempt in their own courts and families. For instance, might not the queen's domesticks of the middle and lower sort be obliged, upon penalty of suspension or loss of their employments, to a constant weekly attendance on the service of the church; to a decent behaviour in it; to receive the sacrament four times a year; to avoid swearing and irreligious prophane discourses; and to the appearance at least of temperance and chastity? might not the care of all this be committed to the strict inspection of proper officers? might not those of higher rank and nearer access to her majesty receive her own commands to the same purpose, and be countenanced or disfavoured according as they obey? might not the queen lay her injunctions on the bishops, and other great men of undoubted piety, to make diligent enquiry, and give her notice, if any person about her should happen to be of
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libertine principles or morals? might not all those, who enter upon any office in her majesty's family, be obliged to take an oath parallel with that against simony, which is administered to the clergy? it is not to be doubted, but that if these or the like proceedings were duly observed, morality and religion would soon become fashionable court virtues, and be taken up as the only methods to get or keep employments there; which alone would have mighty influence upon many of the nobility and principal gentry.

But, if the like methods were pursued as far as possible with regard to those, who are in the great employments of state, it is hard to conceive how general a reformation they might in time produce among us. For if piety and virtue were once reckoned qualifications necessary to preferment, every man thus endowed, when put into great stations, would readily imitate the queen's example in the distribution of all offices in his disposal; especially if any apparent transgression through favour or partiality would be imputed to him for a misdemeanor, by which he must certainly forfeit his favour and station: and there being such great numbers in employment, scattered through every town and county in this kingdom, if all these were exemplary in the conduct of their lives, things would soon take a new face, and religion receive a mighty encouragement: nor would the publick weal be less advanced; since of nine offices in ten that are ill executed, the defect is not in capacity or understanding, but in common honesty. I know no employment, for which piety disqualifies any man; and if it did, I doubt the objection would not be very seasonably offered at present: because, it is perhaps too just a reflection, that in the disposal of places, the question whether a person be *fit* for what he is recommended to, is generally the last that is thought on or regarded.

I have often imagined, that something parallel to the office of censors antiently in *Rome* would be of mighty use among us, and
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could be easily limited from running into any exorbitances. The *Romans* understood liberty at least as well as we, were as jealous of it, and upon every occasion as bold assertors. Yet I do not remember to have read any great complaints of the abuses in that office among them; but many admirable effects of it are left upon record. There are several pernicious vices frequent and notorious among us, that escape or elude the punishment of any law we have yet invented, or have had no law at all against them; such as atheism, drunkenness, fraud, avarice, and several others; which by this institution, wisely regulated, might be much reformed. Suppose, for instance, that itinerary commissioners were appointed to inspect every where throughout the kingdom into the conduct (at least) of men in office with respect to their morals and religion, as well as their abilities; to receive the complaints and informations, that should be offered against them, and make their report here upon oath to the court or the ministry, who should reward or punish accordingly. I avoid entering into the particulars of this or any other scheme, which coming from a private hand might be liable to many defects, but would soon be digested by the wisdom of the nation: and surely, six thousand pounds a year would not be ill laid out among as many commissioners duly qualified, who in three divisions should be personally obliged to take their yearly circuits for that purpose.

But this is beside my present design, which was only to shew what degree of reformation is in the power of the queen, without the interposition of the legislature, and which her majesty is, without question, obliged in conscience to endeavour by her authority, as much as she doth by her practice.

It will be easily granted, that the example of this great town hath a mighty influence over the whole kingdom; and it is as manifest, that the town is equally influenced by the court, and the ministry, and those who by their employments, or their hopes, depend upon them. Now, if under so excellent a princess, as the
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present queen, we would suppose a family strictly regulated, as I have above proposed; a ministry, where every single person was of distinguished piety; if we should suppose all great offices of state and law filled after the same manner, and with such as were equally diligent in chusing persons, who in their several subordinations would be obliged to follow the examples of their superiors, under the penalty of loss of favour and place; will not every body grant, that the empire of vice and irreligion would be soon destroyed in this great metropolis, and receive a terrible blow through the whole island, which hath so great an intercourse with it, and so much affects to follow its fashions?

For, if religion were once understood to be the necessary step to favour and preferment, can it be imagined that any man would openly offend against it, who had the least regard for his reputation or his fortune? there is no quality so contrary to any nature, which men cannot affect, and put on upon occasion in order to serve an interest, or gratify a prevailing passion. The proudest man will personate humility, the morosest learn to flatter, the laziest will be sedulous and active, where he is in pursuit of what he hath much at heart: how ready therefore would most men be to step into the paths of virtue and piety, if they infallibly led to favour and fortune!

If swearing and prophaneness, scandalous and avowed lewdness, excessive gaming and intemperance, were a little discountenanced in the army, I cannot readily see what ill consequences could be apprehended. If gentlemen of that profession were at least obliged to some external decorum in their conduct, or even if a profligate life and character were not a means of advancement, and the appearance of piety a most infallible hindrance, it is impossible the corruptions there should be so universal and exorbitant. I have been assured by several great officers, that no troops abroad are so ill disciplined as the *English*; which cannot well be otherwise, while the common soldiers have perpetually
before

before their eyes the vicious example of their leaders ; and it is hardly possible for those to commit any crime, whereof these are not infinitely more guilty, and with less temptation.

It is commonly charged upon the gentlemen of the army, that the beastly vice of drinking to excess hath been lately from their example restored among us ; which for some years before was almost dropt in *England*. But, whoever the introducers were, they have succeeded to a miracle ; many of the young nobility and gentry are already become great proficient, and are under no manner of concern to hide their talent, but are got beyond all sense of shame, or fear of reproach.

This might soon be remedied, if the queen would think fit to declare, that no young person of quality whatsoever, who was notoriously addicted to that or any other vice, should be capable of her favour, or even admitted into her presence ; with positive command to her ministers, and others in great office, to treat them in the same manner ; after which, all men who had any regard for their reputation, or any prospect of preferment, would avoid their commerce. This would quickly make that vice so scandalous, that those who could not subdue, would at least endeavour to disguise it.

By the like methods a stop might be put to that ruinous practice of deep gaming ; and the reason why it prevails so much is, because a treatment *directly opposite* in every point is made use of to promote it ; by which means the laws enacted against this abuse are wholly eluded.

It cannot be denied, that the want of strict discipline in the universities hath been of pernicious consequence to the youth of this nation, who are there almost left entirely to their own management, especially those among them of better quality and fortune ; who, because they are not under a necessity of making learning their maintenance, are easily allowed to pass their time and take their degrees with little or no improvement : than

which there cannot well be a greater absurdity. For, if no advancement of knowledge can be had from those places, the time there spent is at best utterly lost, because every ornamental part of education is better taught elsewhere: and, as for keeping youths out of harm's way, I doubt, where so many of them are got together, at full liberty of doing what they please, it will not answer the end. But, whatever abuses, corruptions, or deviations from statutes have crept into the universities through neglect, or length of time, they might in a great degree be reformed by strict injunctions from court (upon each particular) to the visitors and heads of houses; besides the peculiar authority the queen may have in several colleges, whereof her predecessors were the founders. And among other regulations, it would be very convenient to prevent the excess of drinking, with that scurvy custom among the lads, and parent of the former vice, the taking of tobacco, where it is not absolutely necessary in point of health.

From the universities the young nobility, and others of great fortunes, are sent for early up to town, for fear of contracting any airs of pedantry by a college education. Many of the younger gentry retire to the inns of court, where they are wholly left to their own discretion. And the consequence of this remissness in education appears by observing, that nine in ten of those, who rise in the church or the court, the law or the army, are younger brothers, or new men, whose narrow fortunes have forced them upon industry and application.

As for the inns of court, unless we suppose them to be much degenerated, they must needs be the worst instituted seminaries in any christian country; but whether they may be corrected without interposition of the legislature, I have not skill enough to determine. However, it is certain, that all wise nations have agreed in the necessity of a strict education, which consisted, among other things, in the observance of moral duties, especially

especially justice, temperance, and chastity, as well as the knowledge of arts, and bodily exercises: but all these among us are laughed out of doors.

Without the least intention to offend the clergy, I cannot but think, that through a mistaken notion and practice, they prevent themselves from doing much service, which otherwise might lie in their power, to religion and virtue: I mean, by affecting so much to converse with each other, and caring so little to mingle with the laity. They have their particular clubs, and particular coffee-houses, where they generally appear in clusters: a single divine dares hardly shew his person among numbers of fine gentlemen; or if he happens to fall into such company, he is silent and suspicious, in continual apprehension that some pert man of pleasure should break an unmannerly jest, and render him ridiculous. Now I take this behaviour of the clergy to be just as reasonable, as if the physicians should agree to spend their time in visiting one another, or their several apothecaries, and leave their patients to shift for themselves. In my humble opinion, the clergy's business lies entirely among the laity; neither is there, perhaps, a more effectual way to forward the salvation of men's souls, than for spiritual persons to make themselves as agreeable as they can in the conversations of the world; for which a learned education gives them great advantage, if they would please to improve and apply it. It so happens, that the *men of pleasure*, who never go to church, nor use themselves to read books of devotion, form their ideas of the clergy from a few poor strolers they often observe in the streets, or sneaking out of some person of quality's house, where they are hired by the lady at ten shillings a month: while those of better figure and parts do seldom appear to correct these notions. And let some reasoners think what they please, it is certain that men must be brought to esteem and love the clergy, before they can be persuaded to be in love with religion. No man

values the best medicine, if administered by a physician, whose person he hates or despises. If the clergy were as forward to appear in all companies, as other gentlemen, and would a little study the arts of conversation to make themselves agreeable, they might be welcome to every party, where there was the least regard for politeness or good sense; and consequently prevent a thousand vicious or prophane discourses, as well as actions; neither would men of understanding complain, that a clergyman was a constraint upon the company, because they could not speak blasphemy or obscene jests before him. While the people are so jealous of the clergy's ambition, as to abhor all thoughts of the return of ecclesiastick discipline among them, I do not see any other method left for men of that function to take, in order to reform the world, than by using all honest arts to make themselves acceptable to the laity. This, no doubt, is part of that wisdom of the serpent, which the author of christianity directs, and is the very method used by St. *Paul*, who *became all things to all men, to the Jews a Jew, and a Greek to the Greeks.*

How to remedy these inconveniencies, may be a matter of some difficulty; since the clergy seem to be of an opinion, that this humour of sequestering themselves is a part of their duty; nay, as I remember, they have been told so by some of their bishops in their pastoral letters, particularly by † *one* among them of great merit and distinction, who yet, in his own practice, hath all his life-time taken a course directly contrary. But I am deceived, if an awkward shame, and fear of ill usage from the laity, have not a greater share in this mistaken conduct, than their own inclinations: however, if the outward profession of religion and virtue were once in practice and countenance at court, as well as among all men in office, or who have any

† Supposed to be Dr. Burnet bishop of Salisbury.

hopes or dependance for preferment, a good treatment of the clergy would be the necessary consequence of such a reformation ; and they would soon be wise enough to see their own duty and interest in qualifying themselves for lay-conversation, when once they were out of fear of being choaked by ribaldry or prophaneness.

There is one further circumstance upon this occasion, which I know not whether it will be very orthodox to mention: the clergy are the only sett of men among us, who constantly wear a distinct habit from others: the consequence of which (not in reason but in fact) is this, that as long as any scandalous persons appear in that dress, it will continue in some degree a general mark of contempt. Whoever happens to see a *scoundrel in a gown*, reeling home at midnight (a sight neither *frequent* nor *miraculous*) is apt to entertain an ill idea of the whole order, and at the same time to be extremely comforted in his own vices. Some remedy might be put to this, if those straggling gentlemen, who come up to town to *seek their fortunes*, were fairly dismissed to the *West-Indies*, where there is work enough, and where some better provision should be made for them, than I doubt there is at present. Or, what if no person were allowed to wear the habit, who had not some preferment in the church, or at least some temporal fortune sufficient to keep him out of contempt? though, in my opinion, it were infinitely better, if all the clergy (except the bishops) were permitted to appear like other men of the graver sort, unless at those seasons when they are doing the business of their function.

There is one abuse in this town, which wonderfully contributes to the promotion of vice; that such men are often put into the commission of the peace, whose interest it is, that virtue should be utterly banished from among us; who maintain, or at least enrich themselves by encouraging the grossest immoralities; to whom all the *bawds* of the *ward* pay contribution
for

for shelter and protection from the laws. Thus these worthy magistrates, instead of lessening enormities, are the occasion of just twice as much debauchery as there would be without them. For those infamous women are forced upon doubling their work and industry, to answer double charges, of paying the justice, and supporting themselves. Like thieves who escape the gallows, and are let out to steal in order to discharge the gaoler's fees.

It is not to be questioned, but the queen and ministry might easily redress this abominable grievance, by enlarging the number of justices of the peace, by endeavouring to chuse men of virtuous principles, by admitting none who have not considerable fortunes; perhaps, by receiving into the number some of the most eminent clergy: then, by forcing all of them, upon severe penalties, to act when there is occasion, and not permitting any who are offered, to refuse the commission; but in these two last cases, which are very material, I doubt there will be need of the legislature.

The reformation of the stage is entirely in the power of the queen; and in the consequences it hath upon the minds of younger people, doth very well deserve the strictest care. Besides the undecent and prophane passages; besides the perpetual turning into ridicule the very function of the priesthood, with other irregularities, in most modern comedies, which have been often objected to them; it is worth observing the distributive justice of the authors, which is constantly applied to the punishment of virtue, and the reward of vice; directly opposite to the rules of their best criticks, as well as to the practice of dramatic poets in all other ages and countries. For example, a country squire, who is represented with no other vice but that of being a clown, and having the provincial accent upon his tongue, which is neither a fault, nor in his power to remedy, must be condemned to marry a cast wench, or a cracked chambermaid. On the other side, a rake hell of the town, whose character is set off

off with no other accomplishment but excessive prodigality, prophaneness, in temperance, and lust, is rewarded with a lady of great fortune to repair his own, which his vices had almost ruined. And, as in a tragedy the hero is represented to have obtained many victories, in order to raise his character in the minds of the spectators; so the hero of a comedy is represented to have been victorious in all his intrigues for the same reason. I do not remember, that our *English* poets ever suffered a criminal amour to succeed upon the stage, till the reign of king *Charles* the second. Ever since that time, the alderman is made a cuckold, the deluded virgin is debauched, and adultery and fornication are supposed to be committed behind the scenes, as part of the action. These and many more corruptions of the theatre, peculiar to our age and nation, need continue no longer, than while the court is content to connive at or neglect them. Surely a pension would not be ill employed on some men of wit, learning and virtue, who might have power to strike out every offensive or unbecoming passage from plays already written, as well as those that may be offered to the stage for the future. By which and other wise regulations, the theatre might become a very innocent and useful diversion, instead of being a scandal and reproach to our religion and country.

The proposals I have hitherto made for the advancement of religion and morality, are such as come within reach of the administration; such as a pious active prince, with a steady resolution, might soon bring to effect. Neither am I aware of any objections to be raised against what I have advanced; unless it should be thought, that the making religion a necessary step to interest and favour might increase hypocrisy among us: and I readily believe it would. But if one in twenty should be brought over to true piety by this or the like methods, and the other nineteen be only hypocrites, the advantage would still be great. Besides, hypocrisy is much more eligible than open infidelity
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and vice ; it wears the livery of religion ; it acknowledges her authority, and is cautious of giving scandal. Nay, a long continued disguise is too great a constraint upon human nature, especially an *English* disposition : men would leave off their vices out of mere weariness, rather than undergo the toil and hazard, and perhaps the expence, of practising them perpetually in private. And I believe it is often with religion as it is with love ; which, by much dissembling, at last grows real.

All other projects to this great end have proved hitherto ineffectual. Laws against immorality have not been executed, and proclamations occasionally issued out to enforce them are wholly unregarded, as things of form. Religious societies, though begun with excellent intention, and by persons of true piety, are said, I know not whether truly or no, to have dwindled into factious clubs, and grown a trade to enrich little knavish informers of the meanest rank, such as common constables, and broken shopkeepers.

And that some effectual attempt should be made towards such a reformation, is perhaps more necessary than people commonly apprehend ; because the ruin of a state is generally preceded by an universal degeneracy of manners, and contempt of religion ; which is entirely our case at present.

Diis te minorem quod geris, imperas. Hor.

Neither is this a matter to be deferred, till a more convenient time of peace and leisure : a reformation in mens faith and morals is the best natural, as well as religious means to bring the war to a good conclusion. Because, if men in trust performed their duty for conscience sake, affairs would not suffer through fraud, falsehood, and neglect, as they now perpetually do. And if they believed a God, and his providence, and acted accordingly,

ly, they might reasonably hope for his divine assistance in so just a cause as ours.

Nor could the majesty of the *English* crown appear, upon any occasion, in a greater lustre either to foreigners or subjects, than by an administration, which producing such great effects, would discover so much power. And power being the natural appetite of princes, a limited monarch cannot so well gratify it in any thing, as a strict execution of the laws.

Besides; all parties would be obliged to close with so good a work as this, for their own reputation: neither is any expedient more likely to unite them. For the most violent party-men, I have ever observed, are such, as in the conduct of their lives have discovered least sense of religion or morality; and when all such are laid aside, at least those among them as shall be found incorrigible, it will be a matter perhaps of no great difficulty to reconcile the rest.

The many corruptions at present in every branch of business are almost inconceivable. I have heard it computed by skilful persons, that of six millions raised every year for the service of the publick, one third, at least, is sunk and intercepted through the several classes and subordinations of artful men in office, before the remainder is applied to the proper use. This is an accidental ill effect of our freedom. And while such men are in trust, who have no check from within, nor any views but towards their interest, there is no other fence against them, but the certainty of being hanged upon the first discovery, by the arbitrary will of an unlimited monarch, or his *vizier*. Among us the only danger to be apprehended is the loss of an employment; and that danger is to be eluded a thousand ways. Besides, when fraud is great, it furnishes weapons to defend itself: and at worst, if the crimes be so flagrant, that a man is laid aside out of perfect shame, (which rarely happens) he retires loaded with the spoils of the nation; *et fruitur diis iratis*. I could name a commission,

mission, where several persons, out of a salary of five hundred pounds, without other visible revenues, have always lived at the rate of two thousand, and laid out forty or fifty thousand upon purchases of land or annuities. An hundred other instances of the same kind might easily be produced. What remedy therefore can be found against such grievances in a constitution like ours, but to bring religion into countenance, and encourage those, who from the hope of future reward, and dread of future punishment, will be moved to act with justice and integrity?

This is not to be accomplished any other way, than by introducing religion as much as possible to be the turn and fashion of the age; which only lies in the power of the administration, the prince with utmost strictness regulating the court, the ministry, and other persons in great employment; and these by their example and authority reforming all who have dependance on them.

It is certain, that a reformation successfully carried on in this great town would in time spread itself over the whole kingdom; since most of the considerable youth pass here that season of their lives, wherein the strongest impressions are made, in order to improve their education, or advance their fortune; and those among them, who return into their several countries, are sure to be followed and imitated as the greatest patterns of wit and good breeding.

And if things were once in this train, that is, if virtue and religion were established as the necessary titles to reputation and preferment; and if vice and infidelity were not only loaden with infamy, but made the infallible ruin of all mens pretensions; our duty, by becoming our interest, would take root in our natures, and mix with the very genius of our people; so that it would not be easy for the example of one wicked prince to bring us back to our former corruptions.

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I have confined myself (as it is before observed) to those methods for the advancement of piety, which are in the power of a prince, limited like ours, by a strict execution of the laws already in force. And this is enough for a project, that comes without any name or recommendation; I doubt, a great deal more, than will be suddenly reduced into practice. Though if any disposition should appear towards so good a work, it is certain, that the assistance of the legislative power would be necessary to make it more complete. I will instance only a few particulars.

In order to reform the vices of this town, which, as we have said, hath so mighty an influence on the whole kingdom, it would be very instrumental to have a law made, that all taverns and ale-houses should be obliged to dismiss their company by twelve at night, and shut up their doors; and that no woman should be suffered to enter any tavern or ale-house upon any pretence whatsoever. It is easy to conceive, what a number of ill consequences such a law would prevent; the mischiefs of quarrels, and lewdness, and thefts, and midnight brawls, the diseases of intemperance and venery, and a thousand other evils needless to mention. Nor would it be amiss, if the masters of those public-houses were obliged, upon the severest penalties, to give only a proportioned quantity of drink to every company; and when he found his guests disordered with excess, to refuse them any more.

I believe there is hardly a nation in *Christendom*, where all kind of fraud is practised in so unmeasurable a degree as with us. The lawyer, the tradesman, the mechanick, have found so many arts to deceive in their several callings, that they far outgrow the common prudence of mankind, which is in no sort able to fence against them. Neither could the legislature in any thing more consult the publick good, than by providing some effectual remedy against this evil, which in several cases deserves greater

punishment, than many crimes that are capital among us. The vintner, who by mixing poison with his wines destroys more lives than any malignant disease; the lawyer, who persuades you to a purchase, which he knows is mortgaged for more than the worth, to the ruin of you and your family; the banker or scrivener, who takes all your fortune to dispose of, when he has beforehand resolved to break the following day, do surely deserve the gallows much better than the wretch, who is carried there for stealing a horse.

It cannot easily be answered to God or man, why a law is not made for limiting the press; at least so far as to prevent the publishing of such pernicious books, as under pretence of *free-thinking* endeavour to overthrow those tenets in religion, which have been held inviolable almost in all ages by every sect, that pretend to be christian, and cannot therefore with any colour of reason be called *points in controversy*, or *matters of speculation*, as some would pretend. The doctrine of the *trinity*, the *divinity of Christ*, the *immortality of the soul*, and even the truth of all *revelation*, are daily exploded and denied in books openly printed; though it is to be supposed, neither party † avow such principles, or own the supporting of them to be any way necessary to their service.

It would be endless to set down every corruption or defect, which requires a remedy from the legislative power. Senates are like to have little regard for any proposals, that come from without doors; though, under a due sense of my own inabilities, I am fully convinced that the unbiassed thoughts of an honest and wise man, employed on the good of his country, may be better digested, than the results of a multitude, where faction and interest too often prevail; as a single guide may direct the way

† Neither whig nor tory.

better than five hundred who *have contrary views, or look a-squint, or shut their eyes.*

I shall therefore mention but one more particular, which I think the parliament ought to take under consideration; whether it be not a shame to our country, and a scandal to christianity, that in many towns, where there is a prodigious increase in the number of houses and inhabitants, so little care should be taken for the building of churches, that five parts in six of the people are absolutely hindered from hearing divine service? particularly here in *London**, where a single minister, with one or two sorry curates, hath the care sometimes of above twenty thousand souls incumbent on him. A neglect of religion so ignominious, in my opinion, that it can hardly be equalled in any civilized age or country.

But, to leave these airy imaginations of introducing new laws for the amendment of mankind; what I principally insist on, is a due execution of the old, which lies wholly in the crown, and in the authority derived from thence: I return therefore to my former assertion, that, if stations of power, trust, profit, and honour, were constantly made the rewards of virtue and piety, such an administration must needs have a mighty influence on the faith and morals of the whole kingdom: and men of great abilities would *then* endeavour to excel in the duties of a religious life, in order to qualify themselves for publick service. I may possibly be wrong in some of the means I prescribe towards this end: but that is no material objection against the design itself. Let those, who are at the helm, contrive it better, which perhaps they may easily do. Every body will agree, that the disease is manifest, as well as dangerous; that some remedy is necessary, and that none yet applied hath been effectual; which is a sufficient excuse for any man, who wishes well to his coun-

* This paragraph is known to have given the first hint to certain bishops, particularly to bishop Atterbury, in the earl of Oxford's ministry to procure a fund for building 50 new churches in *London*.

try, to offer his thoughts, when he can have no other end in view but the publick good. The present queen is a princess of as many and great virtues as ever filled a throne: how would it brighten her character to the present and after ages, if she would exert her utmost authority to instil some share of those virtues into her people, which they are too degenerate to learn only from her example? and, be it spoke with all the veneration possible for so excellent a sovereign, her best endeavours in this weighty affair are a most important part of her duty, as well as of her interest, and her honour.

But it must be confessed, that as things are now, every man thinks he has laid in a sufficient stock of merit, and may pretend to any employment, provided he hath been loud and frequent in declaring himself hearty for the government. It is true, he is a *man of pleasure*, and a *free-thinker*, that is, in other words, he is profligate in his morals, and a despiser of religion; but in point of party, he is one to be *confided* in; he is an assertor of liberty and property; he rattles it out against *popery* and *arbitrary power*, and *priestcraft* and *high-church*. It is enough: he is a person fully qualified for any employment in the court or the navy, the law or the revenue; where he will be sure to leave no arts untried of bribery, fraud, injustice, oppression, that he can practise with any hope of impunity. No wonder such men are true to a government, where liberty runs high, where property, *however attained*, is so well secured, and where the administration is at least so gentle: it is impossible they could chuse any other constitution, without changing to their loss.

Fidelity to a present establishment is indeed the principal means to defend it from a foreign enemy, but without other qualifications will not prevent corruptions from within, and states are more often ruined by these than the other.

To conclude: whether the proposals I have offered towards a reformation, be such as are most prudent and convenient, may
probably

probably be a question ; but it is none at all, whether some reformation be absolutely necessary ; because the nature of things is such, that if abuses be not remedied, they will certainly increase, nor ever stop till they end in the subversion of a commonwealth. As there must always of necessity be some corruptions, so in a well-instituted state the executive power will be always contending against them, by *reducing things* (as *Machiavel* speaks) *to their first principles*, never letting abuses grow inveterate, or multiply so far that it will be hard to find remedies, and perhaps impossible to apply them. As he, that would keep his house in repair, must attend every little breach or flaw, and supply it immediately, else time alone will bring all to ruin ; how much more the common accidents of storms and rain ? he must live in perpetual danger of his house falling about his ears ; and will find it cheaper to throw it quite down, and build it again from the ground, perhaps upon a new foundation, or at least in a new form, which may neither be so safe nor so convenient as the old.

A LET-

A L E T T E R
FROM A
MEMBER of the House of COMMONS in *Ireland*,
TO A
MEMBER of the House of COMMONS in *England*,
CONCERNING THE
S A C R A M E N T A L T E S T.

Written in the Year 1708 *.

S I R,

I Received your letter, wherein you tell me of the strange representations made of us on your side of the water. The instance you are pleased to mention is that of the *presbyterian missionary*, who, according to your phrase, hath been lately *persecuted* at *Drogheda* for his religion: but it is easy to observe, how mighty industrious some people have been for three or four years past, to hand about stories of the hardships, the merits, the number, and the power of the *presbyterians* in *Ireland*, to raise formidable ideas of the dangers of *popery* there, and to transmit all for *England*, improved by great additions, and with special care to have them inserted with comments in those infamous weekly papers, that infest your coffee-houses. So, when the clause enacting a *sacramental test* was put in execution, it was given out in *England*, that half the justices of peace through this king-

* This tract was reprinted in *Ireland* in 1735, when the attempt to repeal the sacramental test was revived. There was an explanatory advertisement prefixed, which is said by lord Orrery to have been dictated, or strictly revised, by the Dean himself: but there are inaccuracies in it, which may well be thought sufficient to

destroy its authenticity: that which in the first paragraph is called the *following treatise* is afterwards said to be an *extract of a discourse*, and it is immediately added, that this *extract* is the *whole*, except some passages of no consequence: these are included in a parenthesis.

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dom had laid down their commissions : whereas, upon examination, the whole number was found to amount only to a dozen or thirteen, and those generally of the lowest rate in fortune and understanding, and some of them superannuated. So, when the earl of *Pembroke* was in *Ireland*, and the parliament sitting, a formal story was very gravely carried to his excellency by some zealous members, of a priest newly arrived from abroad to the north-west parts of *Ireland*, who had publicly preached to his people to fall a murdering the protestants ; which, though invented to serve an end they were then upon, and are still driving at, was presently handed over, and printed with shrewd remarks by your worthy scribblers. In like manner the account of that person, who was lately expelled our university for reflecting on the memory of king *William* ; what a dust it raised, and how foully it was related, is fresh enough in memory. Neither would people be convinced till the university was at the pains of publishing a *Latin* paper to justify themselves. And, to mention no more, this story of the *persecution* at *Drogheda*, how it hath been spread and aggravated, what consequences have been drawn from it, and what reproaches fixed on those who have least deserved them, we are already informed. Now if the end of all this proceeding were a secret and mystery, I should not pretend to give it an interpretation ; but sufficient care hath been taken to explain it, *first*, by addresses artificially (if not illegally) procured, to shew the miserable state of the *dissenters* in *Ireland* by reason of the *sacramental test*, and to desire the queen's intercession, that it might be-repealed. *Then*, it is manifest, that * our speaker, when he was last year in *England*, solicited in person several members of both houses to have it repealed by an act there ; though it be a matter purely national, that cannot possibly interfere with the trade and interest of *England* ; and though

* Mr. *Allen Broderick*, afterwards chancellor of *Ireland*, and lord *Middleton*.

he himself appeared formerly the most zealous of all men against the injustice of binding a nation by laws, to which they do not consent. And *lastly*, those weekly libellers, whenever they get a tale by the end relating to *Ireland*, without once troubling their thoughts about the truth, always end it with an application against the *sacramental test*, and the absolute necessity there is of repealing it in both kingdoms. I know it may be reckoned a weakness to say any thing of such trifles, as are below a serious man's notice; much less would I disparage the understanding of any party, to think they would chuse the vilest and most ignorant among mankind, to employ them for the assertors of a cause. I shall only say, that the scandalous liberty those wretches take, would hardly be allowed, if it were not mingled with opinions that *some men* would be glad to advance. Besides, how insipid soever those papers are, they seem to be levelled to the understandings of a great number; they are grown a necessary part in coffee-house furniture, and some time or other may happen to be read by customers of all ranks for curiosity and amusement, because they lie always in the way. One of these authors (the fellow that was *pilloried*, I have * forgot his name) is indeed so grave, sententious, dogmatical a rogue, that there is no enduring him; the † *observer* is much the brisker of the two, and I think farther gone of late in lyes and impudence than his *presbyterian* brother. [The reason why I mention him, is to have an occasion of letting you know, that you have not dealt so gallantly with us, as we did with you in a parallel case: last year a paper was brought here from *England*, called *A dialogue between the archbishop of Canterbury and Mr. Higgins*, which we ordered to be burnt by the common hangman, as it well deserved, though we

* The fellow that was pilloried, was *Daniel Defoe*, whose name *Swift* well knew and remembered, but the circumstance of the pillory was to be introduced, and the manner of introducing it shews great art in the nicest touches of satire,

and carries all the marks of ridicule, indignation, and contempt. ORRERY.

He was pilloried for a tract called *The shortest way with the dissenters*.

† Mr. *John Tutchin*.

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have no more to do with his grace * of *Canterbury*, than you have with the archbishop of *Dublin*; nor can you love and reverence your prelate more than we do ours, whom you tamely suffer to be abused openly, and by name, by that paultry rascal of an *observer*; and lately upon an affair wherein he had no concern; I mean the business of the *missionary* of *Drogheda*, wherein our excellent *primate* was engaged, and did nothing but according to law and discretion. But because the lord archbishop † of *Dublin* hath been upon several occasions, of late years, misrepresented in *England*, I would willingly set you right in his character. For his great sufferings and eminent services he was by the late king promoted to the see of *Derry*. About the same time he wrote a book to justify the revolution, wherein was an account of king *James's* proceedings in *Ireland*; and the late archbishop *Tillotson* recommended it to the king as the most serviceable treatise, that could have been published at such a juncture. And as his grace set out upon those principles, he has proceeded so ever since, as a loyal subject to the queen, entirely for the succession in the protestant line, and for ever excluding the *pretender*; and though a firm friend to the church, yet with indulgence towards dissenters, as appears from his conduct at *Derry*, where he was settled for many years among the most virulent of the sect, yet upon his removal to *Dublin* they parted from him with tears in their eyes, and universal acknowledgments of his wisdom and goodness. For the rest, it must be owned, he does not busy himself by entering deep into any party, but rather spends his time in acts of hospitality and charity, in building of churches, repairing his palace, in introducing and preferring the worthiest persons he can find, without other regards: in short, in the practice of all virtues, that can become a publick or private life. This and more, if possible, is due to so excellent

* Dr. Thomas Tenison.

† Dr. William King.

a person, who may be justly reckoned among the greatest and most learned prelates of this age, however his character may be defiled by such mean and dirty hands as those of the *observator*, or such as employ him.]

I now come to answer the other part of your letter, and shall give you my opinion freely about repealing the *sacramental test*; only whereas you desire my thoughts as a friend, and not as I am a member of parliament, I must assure you they are exactly the same in both capacities.

I must begin by telling you, we are generally surprized at your wonderful kindness to us on this occasion, in being so very industrious to teach us to see our interests in a point, where we are so unable to see it ourselves. This hath given us some suspicion; and though in my own particular I am hugely bent to believe, that whenever you concern yourselves in our affairs, it is certainly *for our good*, yet I have the misfortune to be something singular in this belief, and therefore I never attempt to justify it, but content myself to possess my own opinion in private, for fear of encountering men of more wit or words, than I have to spare.

We at this distance, who see nothing of the spring of actions, are forced by meer conjecture to assign two reasons for your desiring us to repeal the *sacramental test*; one is, because you are said to imagine it will be a step towards the like *good work in England*. The other more immediate, that it will open a way for rewarding *several persons*, who have well deserved upon a *great occasion*, but who are now unqualified through that impediment.

I do not frequently quote poets, especially *english*: but I remember there is in some of Mr. Cowley's love verses a strain, that I thought extraordinary at fifteen, and have often since imagined it to be spoken by *Ireland*,

*Forbid it, heaven, my life should be
Weigh'd with her least conveniency.*

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In short, whatever advantage you propose to yourselves by repealing the *sacramental test*, speak it out plainly, it is the best argument you can use, for we value your interest much more than our own; if your little finger be fore, and you think a poultice made of our *vitals* will give it any ease, speak the word, and it shall be done: the interest of our whole kingdom is at any time ready to strike to that of your poorest *fishing towns*; it is hard you will not accept our services, unless we believe at the same time, that you are only consulting our profit, and giving us marks of your love. If there be a fire at some distance, and I immediately blow up my house before there be occasion, because you are a man of quality, and apprehend some danger to a *corner of your stable*; yet why should you require me to attend next morning at your levee, with my humble thanks for the favour you have done me?

If we might be allowed to judge for ourselves, we had abundance of benefit by the *sacramental test*, and foresee a number of mischiefs would be the consequence of repealing it; and we conceive the objections made against it by the *dissenters* are of no manner of force. They tell us of their merits in the late war in *Ireland*, and how chearfully they engaged for the safety of the nation; that if they had thought they had been fighting only other people's quarrels, perhaps it might have cooled their zeal; and that for the future they shall sit down quietly, and let us do our work ourselves; nay, that it is necessary they should do so, since they cannot take up arms under the penalty of high-treason.

Now supposing them to have done their duty, as I believe they did, and not to trouble them about the * *fly on the wheel*, I thought *liberty, property, and religion*, had been the three subjects of the quarrel; and have not all those been amply secured to them? had

* Alluding to the fable of a fly, who having exulted in his own importance, and cried out
settled on the spoke of a wheel belonging to a chariot, that was driven rapidly along the road, "What a dust we raise!"

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they at that time a *mental reservation* for *power* and *employments*? and must these two articles be added henceforward in our national quarrels? it is grown a mighty conceit among some men, to melt down the phrase of a *church established by law*, into that of the *religion of the magistrate*; of which appellation it is easier to find the reason than the sense: if by the *magistrate* they mean the *prince*, [the expression includes a falsehood; for when king *James* was *prince*] the established church was the same it is now. If by the same word they mean the legislature, we desire no more. Be that as it will, we of this kingdom believe the church of *Ireland* to be the national church, and the only one established by law, and are willing by the same law to give a *toleration* to dissenters; but if once we repeal our *sacramental test*, and grant a *toleration*, or suspend the execution of the penal laws, I do not see how we can be said to have any established church remaining; or rather, why there will not be as many established churches, as there are sects of dissenters. No, say they, yours will still be the national church, because your bishops and clergy are maintained by the publick: but, *that* I suppose will be of no long duration, and it would be very unjust it should, because, to speak in *Tindal's* phrase, it is not reasonable that revenues should be annexed to one opinion more than another, when all are equally lawful; and it is the same author's maxim, that no free-born subject ought to pay for maintaining speculations he does not believe. *But why should any man, upon account of opinions be cannot help, be deprived the opportunity of serving his queen and country!* their zeal is commendable, and when employments go a begging for want of hands, they shall be sure to have the refusal, only upon condition they will not pretend to them upon maxims, which equally include *atheists, turks, jews, infidels, and hereticks*; or, which is still more dangerous, even *papists* themselves: the former you allow, the other you deny; because these last own a foreign power, and therefore must be shut out. But there

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is no great weight in this ; for their religion can suit with free states, with limited or absolute monarchies, as well as a better ; and the *pope's* power in *France* is but a shadow ; so that upon this foot there need be no great danger to the constitution by admitting *papists* to employments. I will help you to enough of them shall be ready to allow the *pope* as little power here as you please ; and the bare opinion of his being vicar of Christ is but a *speculative point*, for which no man it seems ought to be deprived the capacity of serving his country.

But, if you please, I will tell you the great objection we have against repealing this same *sacramental test*. It is, that we are verily persuaded, the consequence will be an entire alteration of religion among us in no great compass of years. And pray, observe how we reason here in *Ireland* upon this matter.

We observe the *Scots* in our northern parts to be a brave industrious people, extremely devoted to their religion, and full of an *undisturbed* affection towards each other. Numbers of that noble nation, invited by the fertilities of the soil, are glad to exchange their barren hills of *Loquabar* by a voyage of three hours, for our fruitful vales of *Doun* and *Antrim*, so productive of that *grain*, which at little trouble and less expence finds diet and lodging for themselves and their cattle. These people, by their extreme parsimony, wonderful *dexterity in dealing*, and firm adherence to one-another, soon grow into wealth from the *smallest beginnings*, never are rooted out where they once fix, and increase daily by new supplies : besides, when they are the superior number in any tract of ground, they are not *over patient of mixture* ; but such, whom they cannot *assimilate*, soon find it their interest to remove. I have done all in my power on some land of my own to preserve two or three *english* fellows in their neighbourhood, but found it impossible, though one of them thought he had sufficiently made his court by turning presbyterian. Add to all this, that they bring along with them from *Scotland*
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a most formidable notion of our church, which they look upon at least three degrees worse than popery : and it is natural it should be so, since they come over full fraught with that spirit, which taught them to abolish episcopacy at home.

Then we proceed farther, and observe, that the gentlemen of employments here make a very considerable number in the house of commons, and have no *other merit*, but that of doing their duty in their several stations ; therefore, when the test is repealed, it will be highly reasonable they should give place to those, who have much *greater services* to plead. The commissions of the revenue are soon disposed of, and the collectors and other officers throughout the kingdom are generally appointed by the commissioners, which gives them a mighty influence in every county. As much may be said of the great offices in the law ; and when this door is open to let dissenters into the commissions of the peace, to make them high-sheriffs, mayors of corporations, and officers of the army and militia, I do not see how it can be otherwise, considering their industry and our supineness, but that they may, in a very few years, grow to a majority in the house of commons, and consequently make themselves the national religion, and have a fair pretence to demand the revenues of the church for their teachers. I know it will be objected, that if all this should happen as I describe, yet the presbyterian religion could never be made the national by act of parliament, because our bishops are so great a number in the house of lords ; and without a majority there, the church could not be abolished. But I have *two very good expedients* for that, which I shall leave you to guess, and I dare swear our speaker here has often thought on, especially having endeavoured at *one of them* so lately. To convince you, that this design is not so foreign from *some people's* thoughts, I must let you know, that an honest *bell-weather* † of

† Supposed to be Mr. Broderick.

our house (you have him now in *England*, I wish you could keep him there) had the impudence some years ago, in parliament-time, to shake my lord bishop of *Kilaloe* * by his lawn-sleeve, and tell him, in a threatening manner, *that he hoped to live to see the day, when there should not be one of his order in the kingdom.*

These last lines perhaps you think a digression ; therefore to return, I have told you the consequences we fully reckon upon from repealing the *sacramental test*, which although the greatest number of such as are for doing it, are actually in no manner of pain about it, and many of them care not three-pence whether there be any *church*, or no ; yet because they pretend to argue from conscience as well as policy and interest, I thought it proper to understand and answer them accordingly.

Now, sir, in answer to your question, whether if any attempt should be made here for repealing the *sacramental test*, it would be likely to succeed? the number of professed dissenters in this parliament was, as I remember, something under a dozen, and I cannot call to mind above thirty others, who were expected to fall in with them. This is certain, that the presbyterian party having with great industry mustered up their forces, did endeavour one day, upon occasion of a hint in my lord † *Pembroke's* speech, to introduce a debate about repealing the *test clause*, when there appeared at least four to one odds against them ; and the ablest of those, who were reckoned the most stanch and thorough-paced *whigs* upon all other occasions, fell off with an abhorrence at the first mention of this.

I must desire you to take notice, that the terms of *whig* and *tory* do not properly express the different interests in our parliament. [I remember, when I was last in *England*, I told the king, that the highest tories we had with us would make tolerable whigs

* Dr. *Lindsay*, afterwards lord primate.

† Then lord lieutenant of *Ireland*.

there: this was certainly right, and still in the general continues so, unless you have since admitted new characteristicks, which did not come within our definition.] Whoever bears a true veneration for the glorious memory of king *William*, as our great deliverer from popery and slavery; whoever is firmly loyal to our present queen with an utter abhorrence and detestation of the pretender; whoever approves the succession to the crown in the house of *Hanover*, and is for preserving the doctrine and discipline of the church of *England*, with an *indulgence* for scrupulous consciences; such a man we think acts upon right principles, and may be justly allowed a *whig*: and I believe there are not six members in our house of commons, who may not fairly come under this description. So that the parties among us are made up on one side of *moderate whigs*, and on the other of *presbyterians* and their *abettors*, by which last I mean such, who can equally go to a *church* or *conventicle*, or such who are indifferent to all religion in general; or lastly, such who affect to bear a personal rancour towards the clergy: these last are a sett of men not of our own growth, their principles at least have been *imported* of late years; yet this whole party put together will scarce, I am confident, amount to above fifty men in parliament, which can hardly be worked up into a majority of three hundred.

As to the house of lords, the difficulty there is conceived at least as great as in ours. So many of our temporal peers live in *England*, that the bishops are generally pretty near a *par* of the house, and we reckon they will be all to a man against repealing the *test*; and yet their lordships are generally thought as good whigs upon our principles as any in the kingdom. There are indeed a few lay-lords, who appear to have no great devotion for episcopacy; and perhaps one or two more, with whom *certain powerful motives* might be used for removing any difficulty whatsoever: but these are, in no sort, a number to carry any point
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against a conjunction of the rest and the whole bench of bishops.

Besides, the whole body of our clergy is utterly against repealing the *test*, though they are entirely devoted to her majesty, and hardly one in an hundred, who are not very good *whigs* in our acceptation of the word. And I must let you know, that we of *Ireland* are not yet come up to *other folks refinements*, for we generally love and esteem our clergy, and think they deserve it; nay, we are apt to lay some weight upon their opinion, and would not willingly disoblige them, at least, unless it were upon some greater point of interest than this. And their judgment in the present affair is the more to be regarded, because they are the last persons, who will be affected by it: this makes us think them impartial, and that their concern is only for religion and the interest of the kingdom. Because the act, which repeals the *test*, will only qualify a *layman* for an employment, but not a *presbyterian* or *anabaptist* preacher for a church-living. Now I must take leave to inform you, that several members of our house, and myself among the rest, knowing some time ago what was upon the anvil, went to all the clergy we knew of any distinction, and desired their judgment in the matter; wherein we found a most wonderful agreement, there being but *one divine* that we could hear of in the whole kingdom, who appeared of a contrary sentiment, wherein he afterwards stood alone in the *convocation*, very little to his *credit*, though, as he hoped, very much to his *interest*.

I will now consider a little the arguments offered to shew the advantages, or rather the necessity of repealing the *test* in *Ireland*. We are told, the popish interest is here so formidable, that all hands should be joined to keep it under; that the only names of distinction among us ought to be those of *protestant* and *papist*; and that this expedient is the only means to *unite* all protestants

upon one common bottom. All which is nothing but misrepresentation and mistake.

If we were under any real fear of the papists in this kingdom, it would be hard to think us so stupid, as not to be equally apprehensive with *others*, since we are likely to be the greatest, and more immediate sufferers: but on the contrary, we look upon them to be altogether as inconsiderable as the women and children. Their lands are almost entirely taken from them, and they are rendered incapable of purchasing any more; and for the little that remains, provision is made by the late act against popery, that it will daily crumble away: to prevent which, some of the most considerable among them are already turned protestants, and so in all probability will many more. Then, the popish priests are all registered, and without permission (which I hope will not be granted) they can have no successors; so that the protestant clergy will find it perhaps no difficult matter to bring great numbers over to the church; and in the mean time the common people, without leaders, without discipline, or natural courage, being little better than *hewers of wood, and drawers of water*, are out of all capacity of doing any mischief, if they were ever so well inclined. Neither are they at all likely to join in any considerable numbers with an *invader*, having found so ill success* when they were much more numerous and powerful; when they had a prince of their own religion to head them, had been trained for some years under a *popish deputy*, and received such mighty aids from the *French* king.

As to that argument used for repealing the *test*, that it will unite all protestants against the *common enemy*; I wonder by what figure those gentlemen speak, who are pleased to advance it: suppose, in order to increase the friendship between you and me, a law should pass, that I must have half your estate; do

* In the reign of king *James II.* and till after the battle of the *Boyne* in 1690.

you

you think that would much advance the union between us? or suppose I share my fortune equally between my own *children* and a *stranger*, whom I take into my protection; will that be a method to unite them? it is an odd way of uniting parties, to deprive a *majority* of part of their ancient right, by conferring it on a *faction*, who had never any right at all, and therefore cannot be said to suffer any loss or injury, if it be refused them. Neither is it very clear, how far some people may stretch the term of *common enemy*. How many are there of those that call themselves protestants, who look upon our worship to be idolatrous as well as that of the papists, and with great charity put *prelacy* and *popery* together as terms convertible?

And therefore there is one small doubt I would be willingly satisfied in, before I agree to the repealing of the *test*; that is, whether these same *protestants*, when they have by their dexterity made themselves the national religion, and disposed the church revenues among their *pastors* or *themselves*, will be so kind to allow *us dissenters*, I do not say a share in employments, but a bare *toleration* by law? the reason of my doubt is, because I have been so very idle as to read above fifty pamphlets written by as many presbyterian divines, loudly disclaiming this idol *toleration*, some of them calling it (I know not how properly) a *rag of popery*, and all agreeing it was to *establisb iniquity by a law*. Now I would be glad to know, when and where *their successors* have renounced this doctrine, and before what witnesses. Because, methinks I should be loth to see my poor titular bishop *in partibus* seized on by mistake in the dark for a jesuit, or be forced myself to keep a chaplain disguised like my butler, and steal to prayers in a back room, as my grandfather used in those times, when the church of *England* was *malignant*.

But this is ripping up old quarrels long forgot; popery is now the *common enemy*, against which we must all unite: I have been
tired

tired in history with the perpetual folly of those states, who call in foreigners to assist them against a *common enemy*: but the mischief was, these *allies* would never be brought to allow, that the common enemy was quite subdued. And they had reason; for it proved at last, that one part of the common enemy was those who called them in, and so the *allies* became at length the *masters*.

It is agreed among naturalists, that a *lion* is a larger, a stronger, and more dangerous enemy than a *cat*; yet if a man were to have his choice, either a *lion* at his foot, bound fast with three or four chains, his teeth drawn out, and his claws pared to the quick, or an angry *cat* in full liberty at his throat; he would take no long time to determine.

I have been sometimes admiring the wonderful significance of that word *persecution*, and what various interpretations it hath acquired even within my memory. When I was a boy, I often heard the presbyterians complain, that they were not permitted to serve God in their own way; they said they did not repine at our employments, but thought that all men who live peaceably ought to have liberty of conscience, and leave to assemble. That impediment being removed at the revolution, they soon learned to swallow the *sacramental test*, and began to take very large steps, wherein all who offered to oppose them, were called men of a *persecuting spirit*. During the time the bill against occasional conformity was on foot, *persecution* was every day rung in our ears, and now at last the *sacramental test* itself has the same name. Where then is this matter likely to end, when the obtaining of one request is only used as a step to demand another? a lover is ever complaining of *cruelty*, while any thing is denied him; and when the lady ceases to be *cruel*, she is from the next moment at his mercy: so *persecution*, it seems, is every thing, that will not leave it in mens power to *persecute others*.

There is one argument offered against a *sacramental test* by a
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sort of men, who are content to be stiled of the church of *England*, who perhaps attend its service in the morning, and go with their wives to a *conventicle* in the afternoon, confessing they hear very good doctrine in both. These men are much offended, that so holy an institution, as that of the Lord's supper, should be made subservient to such mercenary purposes as the getting of an employment. Now it seems, the law, concluding all men to be members of that church where they receive the sacrament; and supposing all men to live like christians (especially those who are to have employments) did imagine they received the sacrament in course about four times a year; and therefore only desired it might appear by certificate to the publick, that such, who took an office, were members of the church established, by doing their ordinary duty. However, *lest we should offend them*, we have often desired they would deal candidly with us: for if the matter stuck only there, we would propose it in parliament, that every man, who takes an employment, should, instead of receiving the sacrament, be obliged to swear, that he is a member of the church of *Ireland* by law established, with episcopacy, *and so forth*; and as they do now in *Scotland*, *to be true to the kirk*. But when we drive them thus far, they always retire to the main body of the argument, urge the hardship that men should be deprived the liberty of serving their queen and country on account of their conscience: and in short, have recourse to the common stile of their half-brethren. Now whether this be a sincere way of arguing, I will appeal to any other judgment but theirs.

There is another topick of clamour somewhat parallel to the foregoing: it seems by the test-clause, the *military* officers are obliged to receive the sacrament, as well as the *civil*. And it is a matter of some patience, to hear the dissenters declaiming upon this occasion: they cry they are *disarmed*, they are used like papists: when an enemy appears at home, or from abroad, they must

must sit still, and see their throats cut, or be hanged for high-treason if they offer to defend themselves. Miserable condition! woful dilemma! it is happy for us all, that the pretender was not apprised of this *passive presbyterian* principle, else he would have infallibly landed in our *northern* parts, and found them all sat down in their formalities, as the *Gauls* did the *Roman* senators, ready to die with honour in their callings. Sometimes to appease their indignation, we venture to give them hopes, that in such a case the government will perhaps connive, and hardly be so severe to hang them for defending it against the letter of the law; to which they readily answer, that they will not lie at our mercy, but let us fight our battles ourselves. Sometimes we offer to get an act, by which, upon all *popish* insurrections at home, or *popish* invasions from abroad, the government shall be impowered to grant commissions to all protestants whatsoever, without that *persecuting* circumstance of obliging them to *say their prayers* when they receive the sacrament: but they abhor all thoughts of *occasional* commissions; they will not do our drudgery, and we reap the benefit: it is not worth their while to fight *pro aris et focis*; and they had rather lose their estates, liberties, religion, and lives, than the pleasure of *governing*.

But to bring this discourse towards a conclusion: if the dissenters will be satisfied with such a *toleration* by law, as hath been granted them in *England*, I believe the majority of both houses will fall readily in with it; farther it will be hard to persuade this house of commons, and perhaps much harder the next. For, to say the truth, we make a mighty difference here between suffering *thistles* to grow among us, and wearing them for *posies*. We are fully convinced in our consciences, that *we* shall always *tolerate them*; but not quite so fully that *they* will always *tolerate us*, when it comes to their turn; and *we* are the majority, and *we* are in possession.

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He who argues in defence of a law in force, not antiquated or obsolete, but lately enacted, is certainly on the safer side, and may be allowed to point out the dangers he conceives to foresee in the abrogation of it.

For, if the consequences of repealing this clause should at some time or other enable the presbyterians to work themselves up into the national church; instead of *uniting* protestants, it would sow eternal divisions among them. First, their own sects, which now lie dormant, would be soon at cuffs *again* with each other about power and preferment; and the *dissenting episcopals*, perhaps discontented to such a degree, as upon some *fair unhappy* occasion, would be able to shake the firmest loyalty, which none can deny theirs to be.

Neither is it very difficult to conjecture, from some late proceedings, at what a rate this *faction* is like to drive, wherever it gets the *whip* and the *seat*. They have already set up courts of spiritual judicature in open contempt of the laws: they send *missionaries* every where, without being invited, in order to convert the *church of England* folks to *christianity*. They are as vigilant as *I know who*, to attend persons on their death-beds, and for purposes much alike. And what practices such principles as these (with many other that might be invidious to mention) may spawn, when they are *laid out to the sun*, you may determine at leisure.

Lastly, Whether we are so entirely sure of their loyalty upon the present foot of government as you may imagine, their detractors make a question, which however does, I think, by no means affect the body of dissenters: but the instance produced is of some among their leading teachers in the north, who having refused the *abjuration oath*, yet continue their preaching, and have abundance of followers. The particulars are out of my head; but the fact is notorious enough, and I believe hath been published; I think it a pity, it hath not been *remedied*.

Thus I have fairly given you, sir, my own opinion, as well as that of a great majority in both houses here, relating to this weighty affair; upon which I am confident you may securely reckon. I will leave you to make what use of it you please.

I am with great respect,

Dublin, Dec. 4,
1708.

Sir,

Your, &c.

A T R I-

A
CRITICAL ESSAY
UPON THE
FACULTIES OF THE MIND.

To -----

SIR,

BEING so great a lover of antiquities, it was reasonable to suppose, you would be very much obliged with any thing, that was new. I have been of late offended with many writers of essays and moral discourses for running into stale topicks and threadbare quotations, and not handling their subject fully and closely: all which errors I have carefully avoided in the following essay, which I have proposed as a pattern for young writers to imitate. The thoughts and observations being entirely new, the quotations untouched by others, the subject of mighty importance, and treated with much order and perspicuity, it hath cost me a great deal of time; and I desire you will accept and consider it as the utmost effort of my genius.

Philosophers say, that man is a microcosm, or little world, resembling in miniature every part of the great: and, in my opinion, the body natural may be compared to the body politick: and if this be so, how can the *epicurean's* opinion be true, that the universe was formed by a fortuitous concourse of atoms; which I will no more believe, than that the accidental jumbling of the letters of the alphabet could fall by chance into a most ingenious and learned treatise of philosophy. *Risum teneatis amici?* [HOR.] This false opinion must needs create many more; it is like an error in the first concoction, which cannot be corrected in the second; the foundation is weak, and whatever super-

structure you raise upon it, must of necessity fall to the ground. Thus men are led from one error to another, until with *Ixion* they embrace a cloud instead of *Juno*; or like the dog in the fable, lose the substance in gaping at the shadow. For such opinions cannot cohere; but like the iron and clay in the toes of *Nebuchadnezzar's* image, must separate and break in pieces. I have read in a certain author, that *Alexander* wept, because he had no more worlds to conquer; which he needed not have done, if the fortuitous concourse of atoms could create one: but this is an opinion fitter for that many-headed beast the vulgar to entertain, than for so wise a man as *Epicurus*; the corrupt part of his feet only borrowed his name, as the monkey did the cat's claw to draw the chesnut out of the fire.

However, the first step to the cure is to know the disease; and though truth may be difficult to find, because, as the philosopher observes, she lives in the bottom of a well, yet we need not, like blind men, grope in open day-light. I hope I may be allowed among so many far more learned men to offer my mite, since a stander-by may sometimes perhaps see more of the game, than he that plays it. But I do not think a philosopher obliged to account for every phænomenon in nature, or drown himself with *Aristotle*, for not being able to solve the ebbing and flowing of the tide, in that fatal sentence he past upon himself, *Quia te non capio, tu capies me*. Wherein he was at once the judge and the criminal, the accuser and executioner. *Socrates* on the other hand, who said he knew nothing, was pronounced by the oracle to be the wisest man in the world.

But to return from this digression, I think it as clear as any demonstration in *Euclid*, that nature does nothing in vain; if we were able to dive into her secret recesses, we should find that the smallest blade of grass, or most contemptible weed, has its particular use; but she is chiefly admirable in her minutest compositions, the least and most contemptible insect most discovers the
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the art of nature, if I may so call it, though nature, which delights in variety, will always triumph over art: and as the poet observes,

Naturam expellas furca licet, usque recurret. HOR.

But the various opinions of philosophers have scattered through the world as many plagues of the mind, as *Pandora's* box did those of the body, only with this difference, that they have not left hope at the bottom. And if truth be not fled with *Astrea*, she is certainly as hidden as the source of *Nile*, and can be found only in *Utopia*. Not that I would reflect on those wise sages, which would be a sort of ingratitude; and he that calls a man ungrateful, sums up all the evil that a man can be guilty of,

Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dicis.

But what I blame the philosophers for (though some may think it a paradox) is chiefly their pride; nothing less than an *ipse dixit*, and you must pin your faith on their sleeve. And though *Diogenes* lived in a tub, there might be, for aught I know, as much pride under his rags, as in the fine spun garment of the divine *Plato*. It is reported of this *Diogenes*, that when *Alexander* came to see him, and promised to give him whatever he would ask, the cynick only answered, *Take not from me what thou canst not give me, but stand from between me and the light*; which was almost as extravagant as the philosopher, that flung his money into the sea, with this remarkable saying ----

How different was this man from the usurer, who being told his son would spend all he had got, replied, *He cannot take more pleasure in spending, than I did in getting it*. These men could see the faults of each other, but not their own; those they
flung

flung into the bag behind ; * *non videmus id manticae quod in tergo est*. I may perhaps be censured for my free opinions by those carping momus's, whom authors worship as the *Indians* do the devil, for fear. They will endeavour to give my reputation as many wounds as the man in the almanack ; but I value it not ; and perhaps like flies, they may buz so often about the candle, till they burn their wings. They must pardon me, if I venture to give them this advice, not to rail at what they cannot understand : it does but discover that self-tormenting passion of envy, than which the greatest tyrant never invented a more cruel torment.

*Invidia Siculi non invenerere Tyranni
Tormentum majus---*

JUV.

I must be so bold to tell my criticks and witlings, that they can no more judge of this, than a man that is born blind can have any true idea of colours. I have always observed, that your empty vessels sound loudest : I value their lashes as little as the sea did those of *Xerxes*, when he whipped it †. The utmost favour a man can expect from them is, that which *Polyphemus* promised *Ulysses*, that he would devour him the last : they think to subdue a writer, as *Cæsar* did his enemy, with a *Veni, vidi, vici*. I confess I value the opinion of the judicious few, a *Rymer*, a *Dennis*, or a *W-----k* ; but for the rest, to give my judgment at once, I think the long dispute among the philosophers about a *vacuum* may be determined in the affirmative, that it is to be found in a critick's head. They are at best but the drones of the learned world, who devour the honey, and will not work themselves ;

* Alluding to the fable of *Phædrus*, that *Jupiter* had hung over every man's shoulder two satchels, of which one hung before, and contained the faults of his neighbours ; and the other behind, which contained his own,

† It is told of *Xerxes*, that when the sea broke down the bridge of boats, which he had laid over the *Hellepont*, he ordered it to be lashed, and fetters to be thrown into it.

and

and a writer need no more regard them, than the moon does the barking of a little senseless cur. For, in spite of their terrible roaring, you may with half an eye discover the *ass* under the *lion's* skin.

But to return to our discourse: *Demosthenes* being ask'd what was the first part of an orator, replied, *action*: what was the second, *action*: what was the third, *action*: and so on *ad infinitum*. This may be true in oratory; but contemplation in other things exceeds action. And therefore a wise man is never less alone, than when he is alone:

Nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus.

And *Archimedes*, the famous mathematician, was so intent upon his problems, that he never minded the soldier who came to kill him. Therefore not to detract from the just praise which belongs to orators, they ought to consider that nature, which gave us two eyes to see, and two ears to hear, has given us but one tongue to speak, wherein however some do so abound, that the virtuosi, who have been so long in search for the perpetual motion, may infallibly find it there.

Some men admire republics, because orators flourish there most, and are the great enemies of tyranny: but my opinion is, that one tyrant is better than a hundred. Besides, these orators inflame the people, whose anger is really but a short fit of madness.

Ira furor brevis est. ----- HOR.

After which, laws are like cobwebs, which may catch small flies, but let wasps and hornets break through. But in oratory the greatest art is to hide art,

Artis

Artis est celare Artem.

But this must be the work of time, we must lay hold on all opportunities, and let slip no occasion, else we shall be forced to weave *Penelope's* web, unravel in the night what we spun in the day. And therefore I have observed, that time is painted with a lock before, and bald behind, signifying thereby, that we must take time (as we say) by the forelock, for when it is once past, there is no recalling it.

The mind of man is at first (if you will pardon the expression) like a *tabula rasa*, or like wax, which, while it is soft, is capable of any impression, till time has hardened it. And at length death, that grim tyrant, stops us in the midst of our career. The greatest conquerors have at last been conquered by death, which spares none, from the sceptre to the spade.

Mors omnibus communis.

All rivers go to the sea, but none return from it. *Xerxes* wept when he beheld his army, to consider that in less than an hundred years they would be all dead. *Anacreon* was choaked with a grape-stone; and violent joy kills as well as violent grief. There is nothing in this world constant, but inconstancy; yet *Plato* thought, that if virtue would appear to the world in her own native dress, all men would be enamoured with her. But now, since interest governs the world, and men neglect the golden mean, *Jupiter* himself, if he came on the earth, would be despised, unless it were, as he did to *Danae*, in a golden shower: for men now-a-days worship the rising sun, and not the setting.

Donec eris felix multos numerabis amicos.

Thus have I, in obedience to your commands, ventured to
expose

expose myself to censure in this critical age. Whether I have done right to my subject, must be left to the judgment of the learned reader: however, I cannot but hope, that my attempting of it may be an encouragement for some able pen to perform it with more success.

VOL. II. U P R E

PREDICTIONS

FOR

The YEAR 1708.

Wherein the month, and day of the month are set down, the persons named, and the great actions and events of next year particularly related, as they will come to pass.

Written to prevent the people of England from being farther imposed on by vulgar almanack-makers.

By ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, Esq.

I HAVE long considered the gross abuse of astrology in this kingdom, and upon debating the matter with myself, I could not possibly lay the fault upon the art, but upon those gross impostors, who set up to be the artists. I know several learned men have contended, that the whole is a cheat; that it is absurd and ridiculous to imagine, the stars can have any influence at all upon human actions, thoughts, or inclinations; and whoever hath not bent his studies that way, may be excused for thinking so, when he sees in how wretched a manner that noble art is treated by a few mean illiterate traders between us and the stars; who import a yearly stock of nonsense, lyes, folly, and impertinence, which they offer to the world as genuine from the planets, though they descend from no greater a height than their own brains.

I intend in a short time to publish a large and rational defence of this art, and therefore shall say no more in its justification at present, than that it hath been in all ages defended by many learned men, and among the rest by *Socrates* himself, whom I look upon as undoubtedly the wisest of uninspired mortals: to which if we add, that those who have condemned this art, though other-

otherwise learned, having been such as either did not apply their studies this way, or at least did not succeed in their applications; their testimony will not be of much weight to its disadvantage, since they are liable to the common objection of condemning what they did not understand.

Nor am I at all offended, or do I think it an injury to the art, when I see the common dealers in it, the *students in astrology*, the *philomaths*, and the rest of that tribe, treated by wise men with the utmost scorn and contempt; but I rather wonder, when I observe gentlemen in the country, rich enough to serve the nation in parliament, poring in *Partridge's* almanack to find out the events of the year at home and abroad; not daring to propose a hunting-match, till *Gadbury* or he have fixed the weather.

I will allow either of the two I have mentioned, or any other of the fraternity, to be not only astrologers, but conjurers too, if I do not produce a hundred instances in all their almanacks to convince any reasonable man, that they do not so much as understand common grammar and syntax; that they are not able or spell any word out of the usual road, nor even in their prefaces to write common sense or intelligible *english*. Then for their observations and predictions, they are such as will equally suit any age or country in the world. *This month a certain great person will be threatened with death or sickness.* This the newspapers will tell them; for there we find at the end of the year, that no month passes without the death of some person of note; and it would be hard, if it should be otherwise, when there are at least two thousand persons of note in this kingdom, many of them old, and the almanack-maker has the liberty of chusing the sickliest season of the year, where he may fix his prediction. Again, *this month an eminent clergyman will be preferred;* of which there may be some hundreds, half of them with one foot in the grave. Then, *such a planet in such a house shews great machinations, plots and conspiracies, that may in time be brought to*

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light;

light : after which, if we hear of any discovery, the astrologer gets the honour ; if not, his prediction still stands good. And at last, *God preserve king William from all his open and secret enemies, amen.* When if the king should happen to have died, the astrologer plainly foretold it ; otherwise it passeth but for the pious ejaculation of a loyal subject : though it unluckily happened in some of their almanacks, that poor king *William* was prayed for many months after he was dead, because it fell out, that he died about the beginning of the year.

To mention no more of their impertinent predictions, what have we to do with their advertisements about *pills and drink for the venereal disease* ? or their mutual quarrels in verse and prose of *whig* and *tory*, wherewith the stars have little to do ?

Having long observed and lamented these, and a hundred other abuses of this art too tedious to repeat, I resolved to proceed in a new way, which I doubt not will be to the general satisfaction of the kingdom : I can this year produce but a specimen of what I design for the future ; having employed most part of my time in adjusting and correcting the calculations I made some years past, because I would offer nothing to the world, of which I am not as fully satisfied, as that I am now alive. For these two last years I have not failed in above one or two particulars, and those of no very great moment. I exactly foretold the miscarriage at *Toulon*, with all its particulars ; and the loss of admiral *Shovel*, though I was mistaken as to the day, placing that accident about thirty-six hours sooner than it happened ; but upon reviewing my schemes, I quickly found the cause of that error. I likewise foretold the battle of *Almanza* to the very day and hour, with the loss on both sides, and the consequences thereof. All which I shewed to some friends many months before they happened, that is, I gave them papers sealed up, to open at such a time, after which they were at liberty to read them ; and there
they

they found my predictions true in every article, except one or two very minute.

As for the few following predictions I now offer the world, I forbore to publish them, till I had perused the several almanacks for the year we are now entered upon. I found them all in the usual strain, and I beg the reader will compare their manner with mine: and here I make bold to tell the world, that I lay the whole credit of my art upon the truth of these predictions; and I will be content, that *Partridge*, and the rest of his clan, may hoot me for a cheat and impostor, if I fail in any single particular of moment. I believe, any man who reads this paper, will look upon me to be at least a person of as much honesty and understanding, as a common maker of almanacks. I do not lurk in the dark; I am not wholly unknown in the world; I have set my name at length, to be a mark of infamy to mankind, if they shall find I deceive them.

In one point I must desire to be forgiven, that I talk more sparingly of home-affairs: as it would be imprudence to discover secrets of state, so it might be dangerous to my person; but in smaller matters, and such as are not of publick consequence, I shall be very free; and the truth of my conjectures will as much appear from these as the other. As for the most signal events abroad in *France*, *Flanders*, *Italy* and *Spain*, I shall make no scruple to predict them in plain terms: some of them are of importance, and I hope I shall seldom mistake the day they will happen; therefore, I think good to inform the reader, that I all along make use of the *old style* observed in *England*, which I desire he will compare with that of the news-papers, at the time they relate the actions I mention.

I must add one word more: I know it hath been the opinion of several learned persons, who think well enough of the true art of astrology, that the stars do only *incline*, and not *force* the actions or wills of men: and therefore, however I may proceed
by

by right rules, yet I cannot in prudence so confidently assure the events will follow exactly as I predict them.

I hope I have maturely considered this objection, which in some cases is of no little weight. For example: a man may, by the influence of an over-ruling planet, be disposed or inclined to lust, rage, or avarice, and yet by the force of reason overcome that evil influence; and this was the case of *Socrates* *: but the great events of the world usually depending upon numbers of men, it cannot be expected they should all unite to cross their inclinations, for pursuing a general design, wherein they unanimously agree. Besides, the influence of the stars reaches to many actions and events, which are not any way in the power of reason; as sickness, death, and what we commonly call accidents, with many more needfuls to repeat.

But now it is time to proceed to my predictions, which I have begun to calculate from the time that the *sun* enters into *Aries*. And this I take to be properly the beginning of the natural year. I pursue them to the time, that he enters *Libra*, or somewhat more, which is the busy period of the year. The remainder I have not yet adjusted, upon account of several impediments needfuls here to mention: besides, I must remind the reader again, that this is but a specimen of what I design in succeeding years to treat more at large, if I may have liberty and encouragement.

My first prediction is but a trifle, yet I will mention it, to shew how ignorant those sottish pretenders to astrology are in their own concerns: it relates to *Partridge* the almanack-maker; I have consulted the star of his nativity by my own rules, and find he will infallibly die upon the 29th of *March* next, about ele-

* A physiognomist being brought by *Socrates*'s scholars to examine the features of their master, pronounced him, according to the rules of art, passionate, intemperate, and libidinous; and when he was reproached and derided by them for a judgment so remote from the truth, *Socrates* rescued him from their insult by declaring, that his natural disposition was such as had been described, before it was corrected by the study of philosophy.

ven at night, of a raging fever ; therefore I advise him to consider of it, and settle his affairs in time.

The month of *April* will be observable for the death of many great persons. On the 4th will die the cardinal *de Noailles*, archbishop of *Paris*: on the 11th the young prince of *Asturias*, son to the duke of *Anjou*: on the 14th a great *peer* of this realm will die at his country-house: on the 19th an old *layman* of great fame for learning: and on the 23d an eminent goldsmith in *Lombard-street*. I could mention others, both at home and abroad, if I did not consider such events of very little use or instruction to the reader, or to the world.

As to publick affairs: on the 7th of this month there will be an insurrection in *Dauphine*, occasioned by the oppressions of the people, which will not be quieted in some months.

On the 15th will be a violent storm on the south-east coast of *France*, which will destroy many of their ships, and some in the very harbour.

The 19th will be famous for the revolt of a whole province or kingdom, excepting one city, by which the affairs of a certain prince in the alliance will take a better face.

May, against common conjectures, will be no very busy month in *Europe*, but very signal for the death of the *Dauphin*, which will happen on the 7th, after a short fit of sickness, and grievous torments with the strangury. He dies less lamented by the court than the kingdom.

On the 9th a *mareschal* of *France* will break his leg by a fall from his horse. I have not been able to discover whether he will then die or not.

On the 11th will begin a most important siege, which the eyes of all *Europe* will be upon: I cannot be more particular: for in relating affairs, that so nearly concern the *confederates*, and consequently this kingdom, I am forced to confine myself, for several reasons very obvious to the reader.

On the 15th news will arrive of a very *surprizing event*, than which nothing could be more unexpected.

On the 19th three noble ladies of this kingdom will, against all expectation, prove with child, to the great joy of their husbands.

On the 23d a famous buffoon of the play-house will die a ridiculous death, suitable to his vocation.

June. This month will be distinguished at home, by the utter dispersing of those ridiculous deluded enthusiasts, commonly called the *prophets*; occasioned chiefly by seeing the time come, when many of their prophecies should be fulfilled, and then finding themselves deceived by contrary events. It is indeed to be admired, how any deceiver can be so weak to foretel things near at hand, when a very few months must of necessity discover the imposture to all the world; in this point less prudent than common almanack-makers, who are so wise to wander in generals, and talk dubiously, and leave to the reader the business of interpreting.

On the 1st of this month a *french* general will be killed by a random shot of a cannon-ball.

On the 6th a fire will break out in the suburbs of *Paris*, which will destroy above a thousand houses; and seems to be the foreboding of what will happen, to the surprize of all *Europe*, about the end of the following month.

On the 10th a great battle will be fought, which will begin at four of the clock in the afternoon; and last till nine at night with great obstinacy, but no very decisive event. I shall not name the place, for the reasons aforesaid; but the commanders on each left wing will be killed.--- I see bonfires, and hear the noise of guns for a victory.

On the 14th there will be a false report of the *french* king's death.

On the 20th cardinal *Portocarero* will die of a dysentery, with great suspicion of poison; but the report of his intention to revolt to king *Charles* will prove false.

July. The 6th of this month a *certain general* will, by a glorious action, recover the reputation he lost by former misfortunes.

On the 12th a *great commander* will die a prisoner in the hands of his enemies.

On the 14th a shameful discovery will be made of a *french* je-suit, giving poison to a great foreign general; and when he is put to the torture, he will make wonderful discoveries.

In short this will prove a month of great action, if I might have liberty to relate the particulars.

At home, the death of an old famous senator will happen on the 15th at his country-house, worn with age and diseases.

But that which will make this month memorable to all posterity, is the death of the *french* king, *Lewis* the fourteenth, after a week's sickness at *Marli*, which will happen on the 29th, about six o'clock in the evening. It seems to be an effect of the gout in his stomach, followed by a flux. And in three days after monsieur *Chamillard* will follow his master, dying suddenly of an apoplexy.

In this month likewise an *ambassador* will die in *London*; but I cannot assign the day.

August. The affairs of *France* will seem to suffer no change for a while under the duke of *Burgundy's* administration; but the genius that animated the whole machine being gone, will be the cause of mighty turns and revolutions in the following year. The new king makes yet little change either in the army or the ministry; but the libels against his grandfather, that fly about his very court, give him uneasiness.

I see an express in mighty haste, with joy and wonder in his looks, arriving by break of day on the 26th of this month, ha-

ving travelled in three days a prodigious journey by land and sea. In the evening I hear bells and guns, and see the blazing of a thousand bonfires.

A young admiral of noble birth does likewise this month gain immortal honour by a great atchievement.

The affairs of *Poland* are this month entirely settled: *Augustus* resigns his pretensions, which he had again taken up for some time: *Stanislaus* is peaceably possessed of the throne; and the king of *Sweden* declares for the emperor.

I cannot omit one particular accident here at home; that near the end of this month much mischief will be done at *Bartholomew* fair, by the fall of a booth.

September. This month begins with a very surprizing fit of frosty weather, which will last near twelve days.

The pope having long languished last month, the swellings in his legs breaking, and the flesh mortifying, will die on the 11th instant; and in three weeks time, after a mighty contest, be succeeded by a cardinal of the *imperial* faction, but a native of *Tuscany*, who is now about sixty-one years old.

The *french* army acts now wholly on the defensive, strongly fortified in their trenches; and the young *french* king sends overtures for a treaty of peace by the duke of *Mantua*; which, because it is a matter of state, that concerns us here at home, I shall speak no farther of.

I shall add but one prediction more, and that in mystical terms, which shall be included in a verse out of *Virgil*,

*Alter erit jam Tethys, et altera quæ vebat Argo
Delectos Heroas.*

Upon the 25th day of this month, the fulfilling of this prediction will be manifest to every body.

This

This is the farthest I have proceeded in my calculations for the present year. I do not pretend, that these are all the great events, which will happen in this period, but that those I have set down will infallibly come to pass. It will perhaps still be objected, why I have not spoke more particularly of affairs at home, or of the success of our armies abroad, which I might, and could very largely have done; but those in power have wisely discouraged men from meddling in publick concerns, and I was resolved by no means to give the least offence. This I will venture to say, that it will be a glorious campaign for the *allies*, wherein the *english* forces, both by sea and land, will have their full share of honour: that her majesty queen *ANNE* will continue in health and prosperity: and that no ill accident will arrive to any in the chief ministry.

As to the particular events I have mentioned, the readers may judge by the fulfilling of them, whether I am on the level with common astrologers; who, with an old paultry cant, and a few pothooks for planets, to amuse the vulgar, have, in my opinion, too long been suffered to abuse the world: but an honest physician ought not to be despised, because there are such things as mountebanks. I hope I have some share of reputation, which I would not willingly forfeit for a frolick or humour: and I believe no gentleman, who reads this paper, will look upon it to be of the same cast or mould with the common scribbles that are every day hawked about. My fortune hath placed me above the little regard of writing for a few pence, which I neither value or want: therefore let not wise men too hastily condemn this essay, intended for a good design, to cultivate and improve an ancient art, long in disgrace by having fallen into mean unskilful hands. A little time will determine whether I have deceived others or myself: and I think it is no very unreasonable request, that men would please to suspend their judgments till then. I was once of the opinion with those, who despise all predictions from the stars,

till in the year 1686, a man of quality shewed me, written in his *album* †, that the most learned astronomer, captain *Halley*, assured him, he would never believe any thing of the stars influence, if there were not a great revolution in *England* in the year 1688. Since that time I began to have other thoughts, and after eighteen years diligent study and application, I think I have no reason to repent of my pains. I shall detain the reader no longer, than to let him know, that the account I design to give of next years events, shall take in the principal affairs that happen in *Europe*; and if I be denied the liberty of offering it to my own country, I shall appeal to the learned world, by publishing it in *Latin*, and giving order to have it printed in *Holland*.

† *Album*, is the name of a paper book, in which it was usual for a man's friends to write down a sentence with their names, to keep them

in his remembrance, it is still common in some of the foreign universities.

T H E

THE
ACCOMPLISHMENT

Of the First of

Mr. *Bickerstaff*'s Predictions ;

BEING AN

ACCOUNT

Of the Death of

Mr. *Partridge*, the ALMANACK-MAKER,

Upon the 26th Instant.

In a Letter to a Person of Honour.

Written in the Year 1708.

MY LORD,

I N obedience to your lordship's commands, as well as to satisfy my own curiosity, I have for some days past enquired constantly after *Partridge* the almanack-maker, of whom it was foretold in Mr. *Bickerstaff*'s predictions, published about a month ago, that he should die the 29th instant about eleven at night of a raging fever. I had some sort of knowledge of him, when I was employed in the revenue, because he used every year to present me with his almanack, as he did other gentlemen, upon the score of some little gratuity we gave him. I saw him accidentally once or twice about ten days before he died, and observed he began very much to droop and languish, though I hear, his friends did not seem to apprehend him in any danger. About

two or three days ago he grew ill, was confined first to his chamber, and in a few hours after to his bed, where † Dr. *Cafe* and Mrs. *Kirleus* were sent for to visit, and to prescribe to him. Upon this intelligence I sent thrice every day one servant or other to enquire after his health; and yesterday, about four in the afternoon, word was brought me, that he was past hopes: upon which I prevailed with myself to go and see him, partly out of commiseration, and I confess, partly out of curiosity. He knew me very well, seemed surprized at my condescension, and made me compliments upon it, as well as he could in the condition he was. The people about him said, he had been for some time delirious; but when I saw him, he had his understanding as well as ever I knew, and spoke strong and hearty, without any seeming uneasiness or constraint. After I had told him how sorry I was to see him in those melancholy circumstances, and said some other civilities, suitable to the occasion, I desired him to tell me freely and ingenuously, whether the predictions Mr. *Bickerstaff* had published relating to his death, had not too much affected and worked on his imagination. He confessed, he had often had it in his head, but never with much apprehension, till about a fortnight before; since which time it had the perpetual possession of his mind and thoughts, and he did verily believe was the true natural cause of his present distemper: for, said he, I am thoroughly persuaded, and I think I have very good reasons, that Mr. *Bickerstaff* spoke altogether by guess, and knew no more what will happen this year, than I did myself. I told him his discourse surprized me; and I would be glad, he were in a state of health to be able to tell me, what reason he had to be convinced of Mr. *Bickerstaff*'s ignorance. He replied, I am a poor ignorant fellow, bred to a mean trade, yet I have sense enough to know, that all pretences of foretelling by astrology are deceits, for this manifest

† Two famous quacks at that time.

reason,

reason, because the wise and the learned, who can only judge whether there be any truth in this science, do all unanimously agree to laugh at and despise it; and none but the poor ignorant vulgar give it any credit, and that only upon the word of such silly wretches as I and my fellows, who can hardly write or read. I then asked him, why he had not calculated his own nativity, to see whether it agreed with *Bickerstaff's* prediction? at which he shook his head, and said, oh! sir, this is no time for jesting, but for repenting those fooleries, as I do now from the very bottom of my heart. By what I can gather from you, said I, the observations and predictions you printed with your almanacks, were mere impositions on the people. He replied, if it were otherwise, I should have the less to answer for. We have a common form for all those things; as to foretelling the weather, we never meddle with that, but leave it to the printer, who takes it out of any old almanack, as he thinks fit; the rest was my own invention to make my almanack sell, having a wife to maintain, and no other way to get my bread; for mending old shoes is a poor livelihood; and (added he, sighing) I wish I may not have done more mischief by my physick than my astrology; though I had some good receipts from my grandmother, and my own compositions were such, as I thought could at least do no hurt.

I had some other discourse with him, which now I cannot call to mind; and I fear I have already tired your lordship. I shall only add one circumstance, that on his death-bed he declared himself a nonconformist, and had a fanatical preacher to be his spiritual guide. After half an hour's conversation I took my leave, being almost stifled by the closeness of the room. I imagined he could not hold out long, and therefore withdrew to a little coffee-house hard by, leaving a servant at the house with orders to come immediately, and tell me, as near as he could, the minute when *Partridge* should expire, which was not

above two hours after; when, looking upon my watch, I found it to be above five minutes after seven; by which it is clear that Mr. *Bickerstaff* was mistaken almost four hours in his calculation. In the other circumstances he was exact enough. But whether he hath not been the cause of this poor man's death, as well as the predictor, may be very reasonably disputed. However, it must be confessed, the matter is odd enough, whether we should endeavour to account for it by chance, or the effect of imagination: for my own part, though I believe no man hath less faith in these matters, yet I shall wait with some impatience, and not without some expectation, the fulfilling of Mr. *Bickerstaff*'s second prediction, that the cardinal *de Noailles* is to die upon the fourth of *April*, and if that should be verified as exactly as this of poor *Partridge*, I must own I should be wholly surprized, and at a loss, and should infallibly expect the accomplishment of all the rest.

This

This piece being on the same subject, and very rare, we have thought fit to add it, though not written by the same hand.

N.B. In the *Dublin* edition it is said to be written by the late *N. Rowe*, Esq; which is a mistake: for the reverend *Dr. Yalden*, preacher of *Bridewell*, *Mr. Partridge's* near neighbour, drew it up for him.

'Squire *BICKERSTAFF* Detected;

OR, THE

Astrological IMPOSTOR Convicted:

BY

JOHN PARTRIDGE,

Student in Physick and Astrology.

IT is hard, my dear countrymen of these united nations, it is very hard, that a *Briton* born, a protestant astrologer, a man of revolution principles, an assertor of the liberty and property of the people, should cry out in vain for justice against a *Frenchman*, a papist, and an illiterate pretender to science, that would blast my reputation, most inhumanly bury me alive, and defraud my native country of those services, which, in my double capacity, I daily offer the publick.

What great provocations I have received, let the impartial reader judge, and how unwillingly, even in my own defence, I now enter the lists against falsehood, ignorance and envy: but I am exasperated, at length, to drag out this *Cacus* † from the den of obscurity where he lurks, detect him by the light of those stars he has so impudently traduced, and shew there is not a monster in the skies so pernicious and malevolent to mankind, as an

† A thief seized in a cavern by *Hercules*.

ignorant pretender to physick and astrology. I shall not directly fall on the many gross errors, nor expose the notorious absurdities of this prostituted libeller, till I have let the learned world fairly into the controversy depending, and then leave the unprejudiced to judge of the merits and justice of my cause.

It was towards the conclusion of the year 1707, when an impudent pamphlet crept into the world, intituled, *predictions*, etc. by Isaac Bickerstaff, *esq*;---Amongst the many arrogant assertions laid down by that lying spirit of divination, he was pleased to pitch on the cardinal *de Noailles* and myself, among many other eminent and illustrious persons, that were to die within the compass of the ensuing year; and peremptorily fixes the month, day, and hour of our deaths: this, I think, is sporting with great men, and publick spirits, to the scandal of religion, and reproach of power; and if sovereign princes and astrologers must make diversion for the vulgar ---- why then farewell, say I, to all governments, ecclesiastical and civil. But, I thank my better stars, I am alive to confront this false and audacious predictor, and to make him rue the hour he ever affronted a man of science and resentment. The cardinal may take what measures he pleases with him; as his excellency is a foreigner, and a papist, he has no reason to rely on me for his justification; I shall only assure the world he is alive ----- but as he was bred to letters, and is master of a pen, let him use it in his own defence. In the mean time I shall present the publick with a faithful narrative of the ungenerous treatment and hard usage I have received from the virulent papers and malicious practices of this pretended astrologer.

*A true and impartial account of the proceedings of
Isaac Bickerstaff, esq; against me.*

The 28th of *March*, *anno Dom.* 1708, being the night this sham-prophet had so impudently fixed for my last, which made

little impression on myself; but I cannot answer for my whole family; for my wife, with a concern more than usual, prevailed on me to take somewhat to sweat for a cold; and, between the hours of eight and nine, to go to bed: the maid, as she was warming my bed, with a curiosity natural to young wenches, runs to the window, and asks of one passing the street, who the bell tolled for? Dr. *Partridge*, says he, the famous almanack-maker, who died suddenly this evening: the poor girl provoked told him, he lyed like a rascal; the other very sedately replied, the sexton had so informed him, and if false, he was to blame for imposing upon a stranger. She asked a second, and a third, as they passed, and every one was in the same tone. Now, I do not say these are accomplices to a certain astrological 'squire, and that one *Bickerstaff* might be fauntring thereabouts; because I will assert nothing here, but what I dare attest, for plain matter of fact. My wife at this fell into a violent disorder; and I must own I was a little discomposed at the oddness of the accident. In the mean time one knocks at my door; *Betty* runs down, and opening, finds a sober grave person, who modestly enquires, if this was Dr. *Partridge's*? she taking him for some cautious city-patient, that came at that time for privacy, shews him into the dining-room. As soon as I could compose myself, I went to him, and was surprized to find my gentleman mounted on a table with a two-foot rule in his hand, measuring my walls, and taking the dimensions of the room. Pray Sir, says I, not to interrupt you, have you any business with me? only, Sir, replies he, order the girl to bring me a better light, for this is but a very dim one. Sir, says I, my name is *Partridge*: oh! the doctor's brother, belike, cries he; the stair-case, I believe, and these two apartments hung in close mourning, will be sufficient, and only a strip of bays round the other rooms. The doctor must needs die rich, he had great dealings in his way for many years; if he had no family coat, you had as good use the escutcheons of

the company, they are as showish, and will look as magnificent, as if he was descended from the blood-royal. With that I assumed a greater air of authority, and demanded who employed him, or how he came there? Why, I was sent, sir, by the company of undertakers, says he, and they were employed by the honest gentleman, who is executor to the good doctor departed; and our rascally porter, I believe, is fallen fast asleep with the black cloth and sconces, or he had been here, and we might have been tacking up by this time. Sir, says I, pray be advised by a friend, and make the best of your speed out of my doors, for I hear my wife's voice, (which by the by, is pretty distinguishable) and in that corner of the room stands a good cudgel, which somebody has felt before now; if that light in her hands, and she know the business you come about, without consulting the stars, I can assure you it will be employed very much to the detriment of your person. Sir, cries he, bowing with great civility, I perceive extreme grief for the loss of the doctor disorders you a little at present, but early in the morning I will wait on you with all necessary materials. Now I mention no Mr. *Bickerstaff*; nor do I say, that a certain star-gazing 'squire has been playing my executor before his time; but I leave the world to judge, and he that puts things and things fairly together, will not be much wide of the mark.

Well, once more I got my doors closed, and prepared for bed, in hopes of a little repose after so many ruffling adventures; just as I was putting out my light in order to it, another bounces as hard as he can knock; I open the window, and ask who is there, and what he wants? I am *Ned* the *sexton*, replies he, and come to know whether the doctor left any orders for a funeral sermon, and where he is to be laid, and whether his grave is to be plain or bricked? Why, firrah, says I, you know me well enough; you know I am not dead, and how dare you affront me after this manner? Alack-a-day, sir, replies the fellow,

why it is in print, and the whole town knows you are dead ; why, there is Mr. *White* the joiner is but fitting screws to your coffin, he will be here with it in an instant : he was afraid you would have wanted it before this time. Sirrah, firrah, says I, you shall know to-morrow to your cost, that I am alive, and alive like to be. Why, it is strange, sir, says he, you should make such a secret of your death to us that are your neighbours ; it looks as if you had a design to defraud the church of its dues ; and let me tell you, for one that has lived so long by the heavens, that is unhandfomely done. Hift, hift, says another rogue that stood by him ; away, doctor, into your flannel gear as fast as you can, for here is a whole pack of dismals coming to you with their black equipage, and how indecent will it look for you to stand frightening folks at your window, when you should have been in your coffin this three hours ? in short, what with undertakers, imbalcers, joiners, sextons, and your damned elegy-hawkers upon a late practitioner in physick and astrology, I got not one wink of sleep that night, nor scarce a moment's rest ever since. Now I doubt not, but this villainous 'squire has the impudence to assert, that these are entirely strangers to him ; he, good man, knows nothing of the matter, and honest *Isaac Bickerstaff*, I warrant you, is more a man of honour, than to be an accomplice with a pack of rascals, that walk the streets on nights, and disturb good people in their beds ; but he is out, if he thinks the whole world is blind ; for there is one *John Partridge* can smell a knave as far as *Grubstreet*,---although he lies in the most exalted garret, and writes himself 'squire :--- but I will keep my temper, and proceed in the narration.

I could not stir out of doors for the space of three months after this, but presently one comes up to me in the street ; Mr. *Partridge*, that coffin you was last buried in, I have not been yet paid for : doctor, cries another dog, how do you think people can live by making of graves for nothing ? next time you die,
you

you may even toll out the bell yourself for *Ned*. A third rogue tips me by the elbow, and wonders, how I have the conscience to sneak abroad without paying my funeral expences. Lord, says one, I durst have sworn that was honest Dr. *Partridge*, my old friend; but poor man, he is gone. I beg your pardon, says another, you look so like my old acquaintance, that I used to consult on some private occasions; but, alack, he is gone the way of all flesh ---- Look, look, look, cries a third, after a competent space of staring at me, would not one think our neighbour the almanack-maker was crept out of his grave to take the other peep at the stars in this world, and shew how much he is improved in fortune-telling by having taken a journey to the other?

Nay, the very reader of our parish, a good sober, discreet person, has sent two or three times for me to come and be buried decently, or send him sufficient reasons to the contrary, or, if I have been interred in any other parish, to produce my certificate, as the act * requires. My poor wife is almost run distracted with being called widow *Partridge*, when she knows it is false; and once a term she is cited into the court to take out letters of administration. But the greatest grievance is, a paultry quack, that takes up my calling just under my nose, and in his printed directions with *N. B.* + says, he lives in the house of the late ingenious Mr. *John Partridge*, an eminent practitioner in leather, physick, and astrology.

But to shew how far the wicked spirit of envy, malice and resentment can hurry some men, my nameless old persecutor had provided me a monument at the stone-cutter's, and would have erected it in the parish-church; and this piece of notorious and expensive villainy had actually succeeded, if I had not used my utmost interest with the vestry, where it was carried at last but

* The statute of 30 *Car.* II. for burying in woollen requires, that oath shall be made of the compliance with this act, and a certificate thereof lodged with the minister of the parish within eight days after interment.

by two voices, that I am alive. That stratagem failing, out comes a long fable elegy, bedecked with hour-glasses, mattocks, sculls, spades, and skeletons, with an epitaph as confidently written to abuse me, and my profession, as if I had been under ground these twenty years.

And, after such barbarous treatment as this, can the world blame me, when I ask, what is become of the freedom of an *Englishman*? and where is the liberty and property, that my *old glorious friend* came over to assert? we have drove popery out of the nation, and sent slavery to foreign climes. The arts only remain in bondage, when a man of science and character shall be openly insulted in the midst of the many useful services he is daily paying the publick. Was it ever heard, even in *Turkey* or *Algiers*, that a state-astrologer was bantered out of his life by an ignorant impostor, or bawled out of the world by a pack of villanous, deep-mouthed hawkers? though I print almanacks, and publish advertisements; though I produce certificates under the ministers and church-wardens hands I am alive, and attest the same on oath at quarter-sessions, out comes a full and true relation of the death and interment of *John Partridge*; truth is bore down, attestations neglected, the testimony of sober persons despised, and a man is looked upon by his neighbours as if he had been seven years dead, and is buried alive in the midst of his friends and acquaintance.

Now can any man of common sense think it consistent with the honour of my profession, and not much beneath the dignity of a philosopher, to stand bawling before his own door?----alive! alive ho! the famous *Dr. Partridge*! no counterfeit, but all alive!----- as if I had the twelve celestial monsters of the *zodiac* to shew within, or was forced for a livelihood to turn retailer to *May* and *Bartholomew* fairs. Therefore, if her majesty would but graciously be pleased to think a hardship of this nature worthy her royal consideration, and the next parliament, in their great wisdom,

wisdom, cast but an eye towards the deplorable case of their old *philomath*, that annually bestows his poetical good wishes on them, I am sure there is one *Isaac Bickerstaff*, esq; would soon be trussed up for his bloody predictions, and putting good subjects in terror of their lives: and that henceforward to murder a man by way of prophecy, and bury him in a printed letter, either to a lord or commoner, shall as legally entitle him to the present possession of *Tyburn*, as if he robbed on the highway, or cut your throat in bed.

I shall demonstrate to the judicious, that *France* and *Rome* are at the bottom of this horrid conspiracy against me; and that *Culprit* afore said is a popish emissary, has paid his visits to *St. Germans*, and is now in the measures of *Lewis XIV.* That in attempting my reputation, there is a general massacre of learning designed in these realms; and through my sides there is a wound given to all the protestant almanack-makers in the universe.

Vivat Regina.

A V I N-

VINDICATION

OF

ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, Esq;

AGAINST

What is objected to him by Mr. *Partridge* in his almanack for the present year 1709.

By the said ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, Esq;

Written in the Year 1709.

MR. *Partridge* hath been lately pleased to treat me after a very rough manner, *in that which is called*, his almanack for the present year: such usage is very undecent from *one gentleman to another*, and doth not at all contribute to the discovery of truth, which ought to be the great end in all disputes of the *learned*. To call a man *fool* and *villain*, and *impudent fellow*, only for differing from him in a point meerly speculative, is, in my humble opinion, a very improper style for a person of *his education*. I appeal to the *learned world*, whether in my last year's predictions I gave him the least provocation for such unworthy treatment. Philosophers have differed in all ages; but the discreetest among them have always differed as became philosophers. Scurility and passion, in a controversy among *scholars*, is just so much of nothing to the purpose, and at best, a tacit confession of a weak cause: my concern is not so much for my own reputation, as that of the *republick of letters*, which Mr. *Partridge* hath endeavoured to wound through my sides. If men of publick spirit must be superciliously treated for their ingenious attempts,

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how

how will true useful knowledge be ever advanced? I wish Mr. *Partridge* knew the thoughts, which *foreign universities* have conceived of his ungenerous proceedings with me; but I am too tender of his reputation to publish them to the world. That spirit of envy and pride, which blasts so many rising genius's in our nation, is yet unknown among *professors* abroad: the necessity of justifying myself will excuse my vanity, when I tell the reader, that I have near a hundred *honorary* letters from several parts of *Europe* (some as far as *Muscovy*) in praise of my performance. Besides several others, which, as I have been credibly informed, were opened in the post-office, and never sent me. It is true the *inquisition* in *Portugal* was † pleased to burn my predictions, and condemn the author and readers of them; but I hope at the same time, it will be considered, in how deplorable a state *learning* lies at present in that kingdom: and with the profoundest veneration for *crowned heads*, I will presume to add, that it a little concerned *his majesty of Portugal* to interpose his authority in behalf of a *scholar* and a *gentleman*, the subject of a nation, with which he is now in so strict an alliance. But the other kingdoms and states of *Europe* have treated me with more candor and generosity. If I had leave to print the *Latin* letters transmitted to me from foreign parts, they would fill a volume, and be a full defence against all that Mr. *Partridge*, or his accomplices of the *Portugal inquisition*, will be ever able to object; who, by the way, are the only enemies my predictions have ever met with at home or abroad. But I hope, I know better what is due to the honour of a *learned correspondence* in so tender a point. Yet some of those illustrious persons will perhaps excuse me for transcribing a passage or two in my vindication *. The most learned monsieur *Leibnitz* thus addresses to me his third

† This is fact, as the author was assured by Sir *Paul Methuen*, then ambassador to that crown.

* The quotations here inserted are in imita-

tion of Dr. *Bentley*, in some part of the famous controversy between him and Mr. *Boyle*.

letter : *illustrissimo Bickerstaffio astrologiæ instauratori*, &c. Monsieur le Clerc, quoting my predictions in a treatise he published last year, is pleased to say, *ita nuperrimè Bickerstaffius magnum illud Angliæ sidus*. Another great professor writing of me, has these words: *Bickerstaffius, nobilis Anglus, astrologorum hujusce sæculi facile princeps*. Signior Magliabecchi, the great duke's famous library-keeper, spends almost his whole letter in compliments and praises. It is true, the renowned professor of astronomy at *Utrecht* seems to differ from me in one article ; but it is after the modest manner, that becomes a philosopher ; as, *pace tanti viri dixerim* : and page 55, he seems to lay the error upon the printer (as indeed it ought) and says, *vel forsan error typographi, cum alioquin Bickerstaffius vir doctissimus*, &c.

If Mr. Partridge had followed these examples in the controversy between us, he might have spared me the trouble of justifying myself in so publick a manner. I believe no man is readier to own his errors than I, or more thankful to those, who will please to inform him of them. But it seems this gentleman, instead of encouraging the progress of his own art, is pleased to look upon all attempts of that kind as an invasion of his province. He hath been indeed so wise to make no objection against the truth of my predictions, except in one single point relating to himself : and to demonstrate how much men are blinded by their own partiality, I do solemnly assure the reader, that he is the only person, from whom I ever heard that objection offered ; which consideration alone, I think, will take off all its weight.

With my utmost endeavours I have not been able to trace above two objections ever made against the truth of my last year's prophecies: the first was of a French man, who was pleased to publish to the world, that *the cardinal de Noailles was still alive, notwithstanding the pretended prophecy of monsieur Biquerstaffe* : but how far a Frenchman, a papist, and an enemy is to be believed in his own cause against an English protestant, who is true

to the government, I shall leave to the candid and impartial reader.

The other objection is the unhappy occasion of this discourse, and relates to an article in my predictions, which foretold the death of Mr. *Partridge* to happen on *March 29, 1708*. This he is pleased to contradict absolutely in the almanack he hath published for the present year, and in that ungentlemanly manner (pardon the expression) as I have above related. In that work he very roundly asserts, that he *is not only now alive, but was likewise alive upon that very 29th of March, when I had foretold he should die*. This is the subject of the present controversy between us; which I design to handle with all brevity, perspicuity, and calmness: in this dispute, I am sensible the eyes not only of *England*, but of all *Europe*, will be upon us; and the *learned* in every country will, I doubt not, take part on that side, where they find most appearance of reason and truth.

Without entering into criticisms of *chronology* about the hour of his death, I shall only prove that Mr. *Partridge* is not alive. And my first argument is thus: above a thousand gentlemen having bought his almanacks for this year, merely to find what he said against me; at every line they read, they would lift up their eyes, and cry out, betwixt rage and laughter, *they were sure no man alive ever writ such damned stuff as this*. Neither did I ever hear that opinion disputed: so that Mr. *Partridge* lies under a *dilemma*, either of disowning his almanack, or allowing himself to be *no man alive*. But now if an *uninformed* carcase walks still about, and is pleased to call itself *Partridge*, Mr. *Bickerstaff* does not think himself any way answerable for that. Neither had the said carcase any right to beat the poor boy, who happened to pass by it in the street, crying, *a full and true account of Dr. Partridge's death, &c.*

Secondly, Mr. *Partridge* pretends to tell fortunes, and recover stolen goods; which all the parish says, he must do by conversing

verfing with the devil and other evil fpirits : and no wife man will ever allow, he could converfe personally with either, till after he was dead.

Thirdly, I will plainly prove him to be dead out of his own almanack for this year, and from the very paffage, which he produceth to make us think him alive. He there fays, *he is not only now alive, but was alfo alive upon that very 29th of March, which I foretold he fhould die on* : by this, he declares his opinion, that a man may be alive now, who was not alive a twelve-month ago. And indeed, there lies the fophiftry of his argument. He dares not affert, he was alive ever fince that 29th of *March*, but that he *is now alive, and was fo on that day* : I grant the latter ; for he did not die till night, as appears by the printed account of his death, in a *letter to a lord* ; and whether he be fince revived, I leave the world to judge. This indeed is perfect cavilling, and I am afhamed to dwell any longer upon it.

Fourthly, I will appeal to Mr. *Partridge* himfelf, whether it be probable I could have been fo indiscreet, to begin my predictions with the *only* falfhood, that ever was pretended to be in them ; and this in an affair at home, where I had fo many opportunities to be exact ; and muft have given fuch advantages againft me to a perfon of Mr. *Partridge's* wit and learning, who, if he could poffibly have raifed one fingle objection more againft the truth of my prophecies, would hardly have fpared me.

And here I muft take occafion to reprove the above-mentioned writer of the relation of Mr. *Partridge's* death, in a *letter to a lord* ; who was pleafed to tax me with a miftake of *four whole hours* in my calculation of that event. I muft confefs, this censure pronounced with an air of certainty, in a matter that fo nearly concerned me, and by a *grave judicious author*, moved me not a little. But though I was at that time out of town, yet feveral of my friends, whose curiofity had led them to be exactly informed (for as to my own part, having no doubt at all in the matter,

I never

I never once thought of it) assured me, I computed to something under half an hour ; which (I speak my private opinion) is an error of no very great magnitude, that men should raise a clamour about it. I shall only say, it would not be amiss, if that author would henceforth be more tender of other mens reputation as well as his own. It is well there were no more mistakes of that kind ; if there had, I presume he would have told me of them with as little ceremony.

There is one objection against Mr. *Partridge's* death, which I have sometimes met with, though indeed very slightly offered, that he still continues to write almanacks. But this is no more than what is common to all of that profession ; *Gadbury*, *poor Robin*, *Dove*, *Wing*, and several others, do yearly publish their almanacks, though several of them have been dead since before the *revolution*. Now the natural reason of this I take to be, that whereas it is the privilege of other authors *to live after their deaths* ; almanack-makers are alone excluded, because their dissertations treating only upon the minutes as they pass, become useless as those go off. In consideration of which, *time*, whose *registers* they are, gives them a lease in reversion, to continue their works after their death.

I should not have given the publick or myself the trouble of this vindication, if my name had not been made use of by several persons, to whom I never lent it ; one of which, a few days ago, was pleased to father on me a new sett of predictions. But I think these are things too serious to be trifled with. It grieved me to the heart, when I saw my labours, which had cost me so much thought and watching, bawled about by common hawkers, which I only intended for the weighty consideration of the gravest persons. This prejudiced the world so much at first, that several of my friends had the assurance to ask me, whether I were in jest ? to which I only answered coldly, *that the event would shew*. But it is the talent of our age and nation, to turn things of the
greatest

greatest importance into ridicule. When the end of the year had *verified all my predictions*, out comes Mr. *Partridge's* almanack, disputing the point of his death; so that I am employed, like the general who was forced to kill his enemies twice over, whom a *necromancer* had raised to life. If Mr. *Partridge* hath practised the same experiment upon himself, and be again alive, long may he continue so; that doth not in the least contradict my veracity: but I think I have clearly proved, by *invincible demonstration*, that he died at farthest within half an hour of the time I foretold, and not four hours sooner, as the abovementioned author, in his letter to a lord, hath maliciously suggested, with design to blast my credit by charging me with so gross a mistake.

A FAMOUS

FAMOUS PREDICTION

OF

MERLIN,

THE BRITISH WIZARD.

Written above a Thousand Years ago, and relating to the Year
1709.

With Explanatory Notes, by T. N. Philomath.

LAST year was published a paper of predictions, pretended to be written by one *Isaac Bickerstaff*, esq; but the true design of it was to ridicule the art of astrology, and expose its professors as ignorant or impostors. Against this imputation, Dr. *Partridge* hath learnedly vindicated himself in his almanack for that year.

For a farther vindication of this famous art, I have thought fit to present the world with the following prophecy. The original is said to be of the famous *Merlin*, who lived about a thousand years ago; and the following translation is two hundred years old, for it seems to be written near the end of *Henry* the seventh's reign. I found it in an old edition of *Merlin's* prophecies, imprinted at *London* by *John Hawkins* in the year 1530, page 39. I set it down word for word in the old orthography, and shall take leave to subjoin a few explanatory notes.

Seven and Ten addyd to Nine,
Of Fraunce her Woe this is the Sygne,
Tampys Rivere twwys y-frozen,
Walke sans Wetyng Shoes ne hozen.

Then

Then comyth foorth, Ich understonde,
 From Towne of Stoffe to fattyn Londe,
 An herdie Chyftan, Woe the Horne
 To Fraunce, that ever he was born.
 Then shall the Fyſhe beweyle his Boſſe;
 Nor ſhall grin Berrys make up the Loſſe.
 Ponge Symnele ſhall again miſcarrye:
 And Norways Pryd again ſhall marrey.
 And from the Tree Where Bloſoms feele,
 Ripe Fruit ſhall come, and all is wele,
 Beaums ſhall daunce Honde in Honde,
 And it ſhall be merrye in old Inglonde,
 Then old Inglonde ſhall be no more,
 And no Man ſhall be ſorie therefore.
 Geryon ſhall have three Hedys agayne,
 Till Hapsburge makyth them but twayne.

Explanatory Notes.

Seven and Ten, This line deſcribes the year when theſe events ſhall happen. Seven and ten makes ſeventeen, which I explain ſeventeen hundred, and this number added to nine, makes the year we are now in; for it muſt be underſtood of the natural year, which begins the firſt of *January*.

Tamys Revere tways, &c. The river *Thames* frozen twice in one year, ſo as men to walk on it, is a very ſignal accident, which perhaps hath not fallen out for ſeveral hundred years before, and is the reaſon why ſome aſtrologers have thought, that this prophecy could never be fulfilled, becauſe they imagined ſuch a thing would never happen in our climate.

From Town of Stoffe, &c. This is a plain designation
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of the duke of *Marlborough*: one kind of stuff used to fatten land is called *Marle*, and every body knows that *Borough* is a name for a town; and this way of expression is after the usual dark manner of old astrological predictions.

Then shall the Fyſhe, &c. By the *fiſh*, is underſtood the *dauphin* of *France*, as their kings eldeſt ſons are called: it is here ſaid, he ſhall lament the loſs of the duke of *Burgundy*, called the *Boſſe*, which is an old *engliſh* word for *bump-ſhoulder*, or *crook-back*, as that duke is known to be; and the prophecy ſeems to mean, that he ſhould be overcome or ſlain. By the *green berrys*, in the next line, is meant the young duke of *Berry*, the *dauphin's* third ſon, who ſhall not have valour or fortune enough to ſupply the loſs of his eldeſt brother.

Ponge Symnele, &c. By *Symnele* is meant the pretended prince of *Wales*, who, if he offers to attempt any thing againſt *England*, ſhall miſcarry as he did before. *Lambert Symnele* is the name of a young man, noted in our hiſtories for perſonating the ſon (as I remember) of *Edward* the fourth.

And Norway's Pryd, &c. I cannot gueſs* who is meant by *Norway's pride*, perhaps the reader may, as well as the ſenſe of the two following lines.

Reaums ſhall, &c. *Reaums*, or, as the word is now, *realms*, is the old name for *kingdoms*: and this is a very plain prediction of our happy *union*, with the felicities that ſhall attend it. It is added that *Old England* ſhall be no more, and yet no man ſhall be ſorry for it. And indeed, properly ſpeaking, *England* is now no more, for the whole iſland is one kingdom under the name of *Britain*.

* Queen *Anna*.

Geryon shall, &c. This prediction, though somewhat obscure, is wonderfully adapt. *Geryon* is said to have been a king of *Spain*, whom *Hercules* slew. It was a fiction of the poets, that he had three heads, which the author says he shall have again: that is, *Spain* shall have three kings; which is now wonderfully verified; for besides the king of *Portugal*, which properly is part of *Spain*, there are now two rivals for *Spain*, *Charles* and *Philip*: but *Charles* being descended from the count of *Hapsburgh*, founder of the *Austrian* family, shall soon make those heads but two by overturning *Philip*, and driving him out of *Spain*.

Some of these predictions are already fulfilled; and it is highly probable the rest may be in due time; and I think, I have not forced the words by my explication into any other sense, than what they will naturally bear. If this be granted, I am sure it must be also allowed, that the author (whoever he were) was a person of extraordinary sagacity; and that astrology brought to such perfection as this is by no means an art to be despised, whatever Mr. *Bickerstaff*, or other merry gentlemen are pleased to think. As to the tradition of these lines having been writ in the original by *Merlin*, I confess I lay not much weight upon it: but it is enough to justify their authority, that the book from whence I have transcrib'd them, was printed 170 years ago, as appears by the title-page. For the satisfaction of any gentleman, who may be either doubtful of the truth, or curious to be informed; I shall give order to have the very book sent to the printer of this paper, with directions to let any body see it that pleases, because I believe it is pretty scarce.

A
M E D I T A T I O N
U P O N A
B R O O M - S T I C K .

According to the style and manner of the honourable *Robert Boyle's Meditations* *.

THIS single stick, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flourishing state in a forest: it was full of sap, full of leaves, and full of boughs: but now in vain does the busy art of man pretend to vye with nature, by tying that withered bundle of twigs to its sapless trunk: it is now at best but the reverse of what it was, a tree turned upside down, the branches on the earth, and the root in the air; it is now handled by every dirty wench, condemned to do her drudgery, and by a capricious kind of fate, destined to make other things clean, and be nasty itself: at length worn to the stumps in the service of the maids, it is either thrown out of doors, or condemned to the last use, of kindling a fire. When I beheld this, I sighed, and said within myself, **Surely mortal Man is a Broom-stick!** nature sent him into the world strong and lusty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reasoning vegetable, until the axe of intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left him a withered trunk: he then flies to art, and puts on a *perriwig*, valuing himself upon an unnatural bundle of hairs, all covered with powder, that never grew on his head; but now should this our *broom-stick* pretend to enter the scene, proud of those *birchen*

* The sword of wit like the scythe of time cuts down friend and foe, and attacks every object that accidentally lies in its way: but sharp and

irresistible as the edge of it may be, Mr. Boyle will always remain *invulnerable*. ORRERY.

spoils it never bore, and all covered with dust, though the sweepings of the finest lady's chamber, we should be apt to ridicule and despise its vanity. Partial judges that we are of our own excellencies, and other men's defaults!

But a *broom-stick*, perhaps you will say, is an emblem of a tree standing on its head; and pray what is man, but a topsy-turvey creature, his animal faculties perpetually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels should be, groveling on the earth! and yet, with all his faults, he sets up to be an universal reformer and corrector of abuses, a remover of grievances, rakes into every slut's corner of nature, bringing hidden corruptions to the light, and raises a mighty dust where there was none before, sharing deeply all the while in the very same pollutions he pretends to sweep away: his last days are spent in slavery to women, and generally the least deserving; till worn to the stumps, like his brother *besom*, he is either kicked out of doors, or made use of to kindle flames for others to warm themselves by.

A P R O

PROPOSAL

For correcting, improving, and ascertaining the

ENGLISH TONGUE.

In a letter to the most honourable *Robert* earl of *Oxford* and *Mortimer*, lord high treasurer of *Great-Britain*.

To the most honourable Robert earl of Oxford, etc.

My Lord,

WHAT I had the honour of mentioning to your lordship some time ago in conversation, was not a new thought, just then started by accident or occasion, but the result of long reflection, and I have been confirmed in my sentiments by the opinion of some very judicious persons, with whom I consulted. They all agreed, that nothing would be of greater use towards the improvement of knowledge and politeness, than some effectual method for *correcting, enlarging, and ascertaining* our language; and they think it a work very possible to be compassed under the protection of a prince, the countenance and encouragement of a ministry, and the care of proper persons chosen for such an undertaking. I was glad to find your lordship's answer in so different a style, from what hath been commonly made use of on the like occasions for some years past, *That all such thoughts must be deferred to a time of peace*: a topick which some have carried so far, that they would not have us by any means think of preserving our civil or religious constitution, because we are engaged in a war abroad. It will be among the distinguishing marks of your ministry, my lord, that you have a genius above all such regards, and that no reasonable proposal for the honour, the advantage, or the ornament of your country, however foreign to your more immediate office, was

was ever neglected by you. I confess the merit of this candour and condescension is very much lessened, because your lordship hardly leaves us room to offer our good wishes; removing all our difficulties, and supplying our wants, faster than the most visionary projector can adjust his schemes. And therefore, my lord, the design of this paper is not so much to offer you *ways* and *means*, as to complain of a *grievance*, the redressing of which is to be your own work as much as that of paying the *nation's debts*, or opening a trade into the *South-Sea*; and though not of such immediate benefit, as either of these, or any other of your glorious actions, yet perhaps in future ages not less to your honour.

My lord, I do here in the name of all the learned and polite persons of the nation complain to your lordship as *first minister*, that our language is extremely imperfect; that its daily improvements are by no means in proportion to its daily corruptions; that the pretenders to polish and refine it have chiefly multiplied abuses and absurdities; and, that in many instances it offends against every part of grammar. But lest your lordship should think my censure too severe, I shall take leave to be more particular.

I believe your lordship will agree with me in the reason, why our language is less refined than those of *Italy*, *Spain*, or *France*. 'Tis plain, that the *Latin* tongue in its purity was never in this island, towards the conquest of which few or no attempts were made till the time of *Claudius*; neither was that language ever so vulgar in *Britain*, as it is known to have been in *Gaul* and *Spain*. Further, we find that the *Roman* legions here were at length all recalled to help their country against the *Goths*, and other barbarous invaders. Mean time the *Britains* left to shift for themselves, and daily harrassed by cruel inroads from the *Picts*, were forced to call in the *Saxons* for their defence; who consequently reduced the greatest part of the island to their own power, drove the *Britains* into the most remote and mountainous parts, and the rest of the country in customs, religion, and language, became wholly *Saxon*.

This I take to be the reason, why there are more *Latin* words remaining in the *British* tongue than in the old *Saxon*, which, excepting some few variations in the orthography, is the same in most original words with our present *English*, as well as with the *German* and other *Northern* dialects.

Edward the Confessor, having lived long in *France* appears to be the first who introduced any mixture of the *French* tongue with the *Saxon*; the court affecting what the prince was fond of, and others taking it up for a fashion, as it is now with us. *William* the Conqueror proceeded much further; bringing over with him vast numbers of that nation, scattering them in every monastery, giving them great quantities of land, directing all pleadings to be in that language, and endeavouring to make it universal in the kingdom. This at least is the opinion generally received: but your lordship hath fully convinced me, that the *French* tongue made yet a greater progress here under *Harry* the Second, who had large territories on that continent both from his father and his wife, made frequent journeys and expeditions thither, and was always attended with a number of his countrymen, retainers at his court. For some centuries after there was a constant intercourse between *France* and *England*, by the dominions we possessed there, and the conquests we made; so that our language between two and three hundred years ago seems to have had a greater mixture with *French* than at present; many words having been afterwards rejected, and some since the time of *Spencer*; although we have still retained not a few, which have been long antiquated in *France*. I could produce several instances of both kinds, if it were of any use or entertainment.

To examine into the several circumstances by which the language of a country may be alter'd, would force me to enter into a wide field. I shall only observe, that the *Latin*, the *French*, and the *English*, seem to have undergone the same fortune. The first, from the days of *Romulus* to those of *Julius Cæsar*, suffered perpetual

petual changes : and by what we meet in those authors who occasionally speak on that subject, as well as from certain fragments of old laws, it is manifest that the *Latin* three hundred years before *Tully* was as unintelligible in his time, as the *English* and *French* of the same period are now ; and these two have changed as much since *William the Conqueror* (which is but little less than seven hundred years) as the *Latin* appears to have done in the like term. Whether our language or the *French* will decline as fast as the *Roman* did, is a question, that would perhaps admit more debate than it is worth. There were many reasons for the corruptions of the last : as, the change of their government to a tyranny, which ruined the study of eloquence, there being no further use or encouragement for popular orators : their giving not only the freedom of the city, but capacity for employments, to several towns in *Gaul*, *Spain*, and *Germany*, and other distant parts, as far as *Asia* ; which brought a great number of foreign pretenders into *Rome* : the slavish disposition of the senate and people, by which the wit and eloquence of the age were wholly turned into panegyrick, the most barren of all subjects : the great corruption of manners, and introduction of foreign luxury, with foreign terms to express it, with several others, that might be assigned ; not to mention those invasions from the *Goths* and *Vandals*, which are too obvious to insist on.

The *roman* language arrived at great perfection, before it began to decay : and the *French* for these last fifty years hath been polishing as much as it will bear, and appears to be declining by the natural inconstancy of that people, and the affectation of some late authors to introduce and multiply cant words, which is the most ruinous corruption in any language. *La Bruyere*, a late celebrated writer among them, makes use of many new terms, which are not to be found in any of the common dictionaries before his time. But the *English* tongue is not arrived to such a degree of perfection, as to make us apprehend any thoughts of its decay ;

cay; and if it were once refined to a certain standard, perhaps there might be ways found out to fix it for ever, or at least till we are invaded and made a conquest by some other state; and even then our best writings might probably be preserved with care, and grow into esteem, and the authors have a chance for immortality.

But without such great revolutions as these (to which we are, I think, less subject than kingdoms upon the continent) I see no absolute necessity why any language should be perpetually changing; for we find many examples to the contrary. From *Homer* to *Plutarch* are above a thousand years; so long at least the purity of the *Greek* tongue may be allowed to last, and we know not how far before. The *Grecians* spread their colonies round all the coasts of *Asia Minor*, even to the *Northern* parts lying towards the *Euxine*, in every island of the *Ægean* sea, and several others in the *Mediterranean*; where the language was preserved entire for many ages, after they themselves became colonies to *Rome*, and till they were over-run by the barbarous nations upon the fall of that Empire. The *Chinese* have books in their language above two thousand years old, neither have the frequent conquests of the *Tartars* been able to alter it. The *German*, *Spanish*, and *Italian*, have admitted few or no changes for some ages past. The other languages of *Europe* I know nothing of; neither is there any occasion to consider them.

Having taken this compass, I return to those considerations upon our own language, which I would humbly offer your lordship. The period, wherein the *English* tongue received most improvement, I take to commence with the beginning of queen *Elizabeth*'s reign, and to conclude with the great rebellion in forty-two. 'Tis true, there was a very ill taste both of style and wit, which prevailed under king *James* the first; but that seems to have been corrected in the first years of his successor, who, among many other qualifications of an excellent prince, was a great patron of learning. From the civil war to this present time,

time, I am apt to doubt whether the corruptions in our language have not at least equalled the refinements of it; and these corruptions very few of the best authors in our age have wholly escaped. During the usurpation, such an infusion of enthusiastic jargon prevailed in every writing, as was not shaken off in many years after. To this succeeded that licentiousness which entered with the restoration, and from infecting our religion and morals fell to corrupt our language; which last was not like to be much improved by those, who at that time made up the court of king *Charles* the second; either such, who had followed him in his banishment, or who had been altogether conversant in the dialect of those fanatic times; or young men, who had been educated in the same country; so that the court, which used to be the standard of propriety and correctness of speech, was then, and, I think, hath ever since continued the worst school in *England* for that accomplishment; and so will remain, till better care be taken in the education of our young nobility, that they may set out into the world with some foundation of literature, in order to qualify them for patterns of politeness. The consequence of this defect upon our language may appear from the plays, and other compositions written for entertainment within fifty years past; filled with a succession of affected phrases, and new conceited words, either borrowed from the current style of the court, or from those, who under the character of men of wit and pleasure pretended to give the law. Many of these refinements have already been long antiquated, and are now hardly intelligible; which is no wonder, when they were the product only of ignorance and caprice.

I have never known this great town without one or more *dunces* of figure, who had credit enough to give rise to some new word, and propagate it in most conversations, though it had neither humour nor significancy. If it struck the present taste, it was soon transferred into the plays and current scribbles of the

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week, and became an addition to our language; while the men of wit and learning, instead of early obviating such corruptions, were too often seduced to imitate and comply with them.

There is another sett of men, who have contributed very much to the spoiling of the *English* tongue; I mean the poets from the time of the restoration. These gentlemen, although they could not be insensible how much our language was already overstocked with monosyllables, yet to save time and pains introduced that barbarous custom of abbreviating words, to fit them to the measure of their verses; and this they have frequently done so very injudiciously, as to form such harsh unharmonious sounds, that none but a northern ear could endure: they have joined the most obdurate consonants without one intervening vowel, only to shorten a syllable: and their taste in time became so depraved, that what at first was a poetical license not to be justified, they made their choice, alledging, that the words pronounced at length sounded faint and languid. This was a pretence to take up the same custom in prose: so that most of the books we see now-a-days, are full of those manglings and abbreviations. Instances of this abuse are innumerable: what does your lordship think of the words, *drudg'd*, *disturb'd*, *rebuk'd*, *fledg'd*, and a thousand others every where to be met with in prose as well as verse? Where by leaving out a vowel to save a syllable we form so jarring a sound, and so difficult to utter, that I have often wondered how it could ever obtain.

Another cause (and perhaps borrowed from the former) which hath contributed not a little to the maiming of our language, is a foolish opinion, advanced of late years, that we ought to spell exactly as we speak; which, beside the obvious inconvenience of utterly destroying our etymology, would be a thing we should never see an end of. Not only the several towns and counties of *England* have a different way of pronouncing, but even here in *London* they clip their words after one manner about the
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court, another in the city, and a third in the suburbs: and in a few years, it is probable, will all differ from themselves, as fancy or fashion shall direct: all which reduced to writing would entirely confound orthography. Yet many people are so fond of this conceit, that it is sometimes a difficult matter to read modern books and pamphlets; where the words are so curtailed, and varied from their original spelling, that whoever hath been used to plain *English*, will hardly know them by sight.

Several young men at the universities, terribly possessed with the fear of pedantry, run into a worse extreme, and think all politeness to consist in reading the daily trash sent down to them from hence: this they call *knowing the world*, and *reading men and manners*. Thus furnished they come up to town, reckon all their errors for accomplishments, borrow the newest sett of phrases; and if they take a pen into their hands, all the odd words they have picked up in a coffee-house, or a gaming ordinary, are produced as flowers of style; and the orthography refined to the utmost. To this we owe those monstrous productions, which under the name of *trips*, *spies*, *amusements*, and other conceited appellations, have over-run us for some years past. To this we owe that strange race of wits, who tell us, they write to the *humour of the age*. And I wish I could say, the sequaint fopperies were wholly absent from graver subjects. In short, I would undertake to shew your lordship several pieces, where the beauties of this kind are so predominant, that with all your skill in languages you could never be able to read or understand them.

But I am very much mistaken, if many of these false refinements among us do not arise from a principle, which would quite destroy their credit, if it were well understood and considered. For I am afraid, my lord, that with all the real good qualities of our country we are naturally not very polite. This perpetual disposition to shorten our words, by retrenching the vowels, is nothing else but a tendency to lapse into the barbarity of those

northern nations, from whom we are descended, and whose languages labour all under the same defect. For it is worthy our observation, that the *Spaniards*, the *French*, and the *Italians*, although derived from the same *northern* ancestors with ourselves, are with the utmost difficulty taught to pronounce our words, which the *Swedes* and *Danes*, as well as the *Germans* and the *Dutch*, attain to with ease, because our syllables resemble theirs in the roughness and frequency of consonants. Now, as we struggle with an ill climate to improve the nobler kinds of fruits, are at the expence of walls to receive and reverberate the faint rays of the sun, and fence against the *northern* blasts, we sometimes by the help of a good soil equal the production of warmer countries, who have no need to be at so much cost and care. It is the same thing with respect to the politer arts among us; and the same defect of heat which gives a fierceness to our natures, may contribute to that roughness of our language, which bears some analogy to the harsh fruit of colder countries. For I do not reckon that we want a *genius* more than the rest of our neighbours: but your lordship will be of my opinion, that we ought to struggle with these natural disadvantages as much as we can, and be careful whom we employ, whenever we design to correct them, which is a work that has hitherto been assumed by the least qualified hands. So that if the choice had been left to me, I would rather have trusted the refinement of our language, as far as it relates to sound, to the judgment of the women, than of illiterate court-fops, half-witted poets, and university-boys. For it is plain, that women in their manner of corrupting words do naturally discard the consonants, as we do the vowels. What I am going to tell your lordship appears very trifling: that more than once, where some of both sexes were in company, I have persuaded two or three of each to take a pen, and write down a number of letters joined together, just as it came into their heads; and upon reading this gibberish, we have found that which the men

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had wrote, by the frequent encountering of rough consonants, to sound like *High-Dutch*; and the other by the women like *Italian*, abounding in vowels and liquids. Now, though I would by no means give ladies the trouble of advising us in the reformation of our language, yet I cannot help thinking, that since they have been left out of all meetings, except parties at play, or where worse designs are carried on, our conversation hath very much degenerated.

In order to reform our language, I conceive, my lord, that a free judicious choice should be made of such persons, as are generally allowed to be best qualified for such a work, without any regard to quality, party or profession. These, to a certain number at least, should assemble at some appointed time and place, and fix on rules, by which they design to proceed. What methods they will take, is not for me to prescribe. Your lordship, and other persons in great employment, might please to be of the number: and I am afraid such a society would want your instruction and example as much as your protection; for I have, not without a little envy, observed of late the style of some great ministers very much to exceed that of any other productions.

The persons who are to undertake this work will have the example of the *French* before them to imitate, where these have proceeded right, and to avoid their mistakes. Besides the grammar-part, wherein we are allowed to be very defective, they will observe many gross improprieties, which however authorised by practice, and grown familiar, ought to be discarded. They will find many words that deserve to be utterly thrown out of our language, many more to be corrected, and perhaps not a few long since antiquated, which ought to be restored on account of their energy and sound.

But what I have most at heart, is, that some method should be thought on for *ascertaining* and *fixing* our language for ever, after such alterations are made in it as shall be thought requisite.

For

For I am of opinion, that it is better a language should not be wholly perfect, than that it should be perpetually changing; and we must give over at one time, or at length infallibly change for the worse, as the *Romans* did, when they began to quit their *simplicity* of style for affected refinements, such as we meet in *Tacitus* and other authors; which ended by degrees in many barbarities, even before the *Goths* had invaded *Italy*.

The fame of our writers is usually confined to these two islands, and it is hard it should be limited in *time* as much as *place* by the perpetual variations of our speech. It is your lordship's observation, that if it were not for the *Bible* and *Common Prayer Book* in the vulgar tongue, we should hardly be able to understand any thing, that was written among us an hundred years ago; which is certainly true: for those books being perpetually read in churches, have proved a kind of standard for language, especially to the common people. And I doubt, whether the alterations since introduced have added much to the beauty or strength of the *English* tongue, though they have taken off a great deal from that *simplicity*, which is one of the greatest perfections in any language. You, my lord, who are so conversant in the sacred writings, and so great a judge of them in their originals, will agree, that no translation our country ever yet produced hath come up to that of the *Old* and *New Testament*: and by the many beautiful passages, which I have often had the honour to hear your lordship cite from thence, I am persuaded, that the translators of the bible were masters of an *English* style much fitter for that work, than any we see in our present writings; which I take to be owing to the *simplicity* that runs through the whole. Then, as to the greatest part of our *liturgy*, compiled long before the translation of the *Bible* now in use, and little altered since; there seem to be in it as great strains of true sublime eloquence, as are any where to be found in our language; which every man of good taste will observe in the *communion service*, that of *burial*, and other parts.

But when I say, that I would have our language, after it is duly correct, always to last, I do not mean that it should never be enlarged. Provided that no word, which a society shall give a sanction to, be afterwards antiquated and exploded, they may have liberty to receive whatever new ones they shall find occasion for; because then the old books will yet be always valuable according to their intrinsic worth, and not thrown aside on account of unintelligible words and phrases, which appear harsh and uncouth, only because they are out of fashion. Had the *Roman* tongue continued vulgar in that city till this time, it would have been absolutely necessary, from the mighty changes that have been made in law and religion, from the many terms of art required in trade and in war, from the new inventions that have happened in the world, from the vast spreading of navigation and commerce, with many other obvious circumstances, to have made great additions to that language; yet the ancients would still have been read and understood with pleasure and ease. The *Greek* tongue received many enlargements between the time of *Homer* and that of *Plutarch*, yet the former author was probably as well understood in *Trajan's* time as the latter. What *Horace* says of *words going off and perishing like leaves, and new ones coming in their place*, is a misfortune he laments, rather than a thing he approves; but I cannot see why this should be absolutely necessary, or if it were, what would have become of his *monumentum ære perennius*.

Writing by memory only, as I do at present, I would gladly keep within my depth; and therefore shall not enter into further particulars. Neither do I pretend more than to shew the usefulness of this design, and to make some general observations, leaving the rest to that society, which I hope will owe its institution and patronage to your lordship. Besides, I would willingly avoid repetition, having about a year ago communicated to the public much of what I had to offer upon this subject, by the hands of an

ingenious gentleman, who for a long time did thrice a week divert or instruct the kingdom by his papers; and is supposed to pursue the same design at present under the title of *Spectator*. This author, who hath tried the force and compass of our language with so much success, agrees entirely with me in most of my sentiments relating to it; so do the greatest part of the men of wit and learning, whom I have had the happiness to converse with; and therefore I imagine that such a society would be pretty unanimous in the main points.

Your lordship must allow, that such a work as this brought to perfection would very much contribute to the glory of her majesty's reign; which ought to be recorded in words more durable than brass, and such as our posterity may read a thousand years hence with pleasure as well as admiration. I always disapproved that false compliment to princes, that the most lasting monument they can have, is the hearts of their subjects. It is indeed their greatest present felicity to reign in their subjects hearts; but these are too perishable to preserve their memories, which can only be done by the pens of able and faithful historians. And I take it to be your lordship's duty, as *prime minister*, to give order for inspecting our language, and rendering it fit to record the history of so great and good a princess. Besides, my lord, as disinterested as you appear to the world, I am convinced, that no man is more in the power of a prevailing favourite passion than yourself; I mean that desire of true and lasting honour, which you have borne along with you through every stage of your life. To this you have often sacrificed your interest, your ease, and your health: for preserving and increasing this you have exposed your person to secret treachery and open violence. There is not perhaps an example in history of any minister, who in so short a time hath performed so many great things, and overcome so many difficulties. Now, though I am fully convinced, that you fear God, honour your queen, and love your country, as much as any of your fellow-

low-subjects, yet I must believe, that the desire of fame hath been no inconsiderable motive to quicken you in the pursuit of those actions, which will best deserve it. But at the same time I must be so plain as to tell your lordship, that if you will not take some care to settle our language, and put it into a state of continuance, I cannot promise that your memory shall be preserved above an hundred years, farther than by imperfect tradition.

As barbarous and ignorant as we were in former centuries, there was more effectual care taken by our ancestors to preserve the memory of times and persons, than we find in this age of learning and politeness, as we are pleased to call it. The rude *Latin* of the *monks* is still very intelligible; whereas, had their records been delivered down only in the vulgar tongue, so barren and so barbarous, so subject to continual succeeding changes, they could not now be understood, unless by antiquaries, who make it their study to expound them. And we must at this day have been content with such poor abstracts of our *English* story, as laborious men of low genius would think fit to give us: and even these in the next age would be likewise swallowed up in succeeding collections. If things go on at this rate, all I can promise your lordship, is, that about two hundred years hence some painful compiler, who will be at the trouble of studying old language, may inform the world, that in the reign of queen *Anne* Robert earl of *Oxford*, a very wise and excellent man, was made *high treasurer*, and saved his country, which in those days was almost ruined by a *foreign war*, and a *domestick faction*. Thus much he may be able to pick out, and willing to transfer into his new history; but the rest of your character, which I or any other writer may now value ourselves by drawing, and the particular account of the great things done under your ministry, for which you are already so celebrated in most parts of *Europe*, will probably be dropped on account of the antiquated style and manner they are delivered in.

How then shall any man, who hath a genius for history equal

to the best of the ancients, be able to undertake such a work with spirit and chearfulness, when he considers that he will be read with pleasure but a very few years, and in an age or two shall hardly be understood without an interpreter? This is like employing an excellent statuary to work upon mouldering stone. Those, who apply their studies to preserve the memory of others, will always have some concern for their own. And I believe it is for this reason, that so few writers among us of any distinction have turned their thoughts to such a discouraging employment: for the best *English* historian must lie under this mortification, that when his style grows antiquated, he will be only considered as a tedious relator of facts; and perhaps consulted in his turn among other neglected authors to furnish materials for some future collector.

I doubt your lordship is but ill entertained with a few scattered thoughts upon a subject, that deserves to be treated with ability and care: however, I must beg leave to add a few words more, perhaps not altogether foreign to the same matter. I know not whether that which I am going to say may pass for caution, advice, or reproach, any of which will be justly thought very improper from one in my station to one in yours. However, I must venture to affirm, that if genius and learning be not encouraged under your lordship's administration, you are the most inexcusable person alive. All your other virtues, my lord, will be defective without this; your affability, candor, and good nature; that perpetual agreeableness of conversation, so disengaged in the midst of such a weight of business and opposition; even your justice, prudence, and magnanimity, will shine less bright without it. Your lordship is universally allowed to possess a very large portion in most parts of literature; and to this you owe the cultivating those many virtues which otherwise would have been less adorned, or in lower perfection. Neither can you acquit yourself of these obligations, without letting the arts in their turn share your influence and protection: besides, who knows but
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some *true genius* may happen to arise under your ministry, *exortus ut ætherius sol.* Every age might perhaps produce one or two of these to adorn it, if they were not sunk under the censure and obloquy of plodding, servile, imitating pedants: I do not mean by a true genius any bold writer, who breaks through the rules of decency to distinguish himself by the singularity of his opinions: but one, who upon a deserving subject is able to open new scenes, and discover a vein of true and noble thinking, which never entered into any imagination before: every stroke of whose pen is worth all the paper blotted by hundreds of others in the compass of their lives. I know, my lord, your friends will offer in your defence, that in your private capacity you never refused your purse and credit to the service and support of learned or ingenious men: and that ever since you have been in publick employment, you have constantly bestowed your favours to the most deserving persons. But I desire your lordship not to be deceived: we never will admit of these excuses, nor will allow your private liberality, as great as it is, to atone for your excessive publick thrift. But here again I am afraid most good subjects will interpose in your defence, by alledging the desperate condition you found the nation in, and the necessity there was for so able and faithful a steward to retrieve it, if possible, by the utmost frugality. We grant all this, my lord; but then it ought likewise to be considered, that you have already saved several millions to the publick, and that what we ask is too inconsiderable to break into any rules of the strictest good husbandry. The *French* king bestows about half a dozen pensions to learned men in several parts of *Europe*, and perhaps a dozen in his own kingdom; which in the whole do probably not amount to half the income of many a private commoner in *England*, yet have more contributed to the glory of that prince, than any million he hath otherwise employed. For learning, like all true merit, is easily satisfied; whilst the false and counterfeit is perpetually craving, and never thinks it hath enough.

enough. The smallest favour given by a great prince, as a mark of esteem, to reward the endowments of the mind, never fails to be returned with praise and gratitude, and loudly celebrated to the world. I have known some years ago several pensions given to particular persons, (how deservedly I shall not inquire) any one of which, if divided into smaller parcels, and distributed by the crown to those, who might upon occasion distinguish themselves by some extraordinary production of wit or learning, would be amply sufficient to answer the end. Or if any such persons were above money, (as every great *genius* certainly is with very moderate conveniencies of life) a medal, or some mark of distinction, would do full as well.

But I forget my province, and find myself turning projector before I am aware; although it be one of the last characters under which I should desire to appear before your lordship, especially when I have the ambition of aspiring to that of being with the greatest respect and truth,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

most obedient, most obliged,

and most humble servant,

London, Feb. 22,

1711-12.

SOME

SOME
FREE THOUGHTS
UPON THE
PRESENT STATE
OF
AFFAIRS.

Written in the Year 1714.

ABOUT a month before the demise of queen *Anne*, the dean having laboured to reconcile the ministers to each other without success, retired to the house of a friend in *Berkshire*, and never saw them more. But during this retreat he wrote the following treatise, which he thought might be of some use even in that juncture, and sent it up to *London* to be printed; but, upon some difference in opinion between the author and the late lord *Bolingbroke*, the publication was delayed till the queen's death, and then he recalled his copy: it was afterwards placed in the hands of the late alderman *Barber*, from whom it was obtained to be printed. The ruin of the ministry by this animosity among themselves was long foreseen and foretold by *Swift*, and it appears by lord *Bolingbroke's* letter to sir *William Windham*, that in his heart he renounced his friendship for *Oxford* long before the conclusion of the peace, though it did not appear till afterwards. "The peace," says he, which had been judged to be the only solid foundation whereupon we could erect a tory system, and yet when it was made we found ourselves at a stand; nay the very work, which ought to have been the basis of our strength, was in part demolished before our eyes, and we were stoned with the ruins of it." This event probably rendered the disunion of the ministry visible; some principally endeavouring to secure themselves, some still labouring to establish at all events the party they had espoused, which saw nothing but "increase of mortification and nearer approaches to ruin," and it is not to be wondered, that when this treatise was written, the dean's attempts to reconcile his friends were unsuccessful; for *Bolingbroke* declares, that he abhorred *Oxford* to such a degree, that he would rather have suffered banishment or death, than have taken measures in concert with him to have avoided either.

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Whatever may be thought or practised by profound politicians, they will hardly be able to convince the reasonable part of mankind, that the most plain, short, easy, safe, and lawful way to any good end is not more eligible, than one directly contrary in some or all of these qualities. I have been frequently assured by great ministers, that politicks were nothing but common sense; which, as it was the only true thing they spoke, so it was the only thing they could have wished I should not believe. God hath given the bulk of mankind a capacity to understand reason when it is fairly offered; and by reason they would easily be governed, if it were left to their choice. Those princes in all ages, who were most distinguished for their mysterious skill in government, found by the event, that they had ill consulted their own quiet, or the ease and happiness of their people; nor hath posterity remembered them with honour: such as *Lyfander* and *Philip* among the *Greeks*, *Tiberius* in *Rome*, pope *Alexander* the sixth and his son *Cæsar Borgia*, queen *Catherine de Medicis*, *Philip* the second of *Spain*, with many others. Nor are examples less frequent of ministers, famed for men of deep intrigue, whose politicks have produced little more than murmurings, factions, and discontents, which usually terminated in the disgrace and ruin of the authors.

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I can recollect but three occasions in a state, where the talents of such men may be thought necessary ; I mean in a state where the prince is obeyed and loved by his subjects : first, in the negociation of a peace ; secondly, in adjusting the interests of our own country with those of the nations round us, watching the several motions of our neighbours and allies, and preserving a due balance among them : lastly, in the management of parties and factions at home. In the first of these cases I have often heard it observed, that plain good sense and a firm adherence to the point have proved more effectual than all those arts, which I remember a great foreign minister used in contempt to call the *spirit of negotiating*. In the second case much wisdom and a thorough knowledge in affairs both foreign and domestick are certainly required : after which I know no talents necessary besides method and skill in the common forms of business. In the last case, which is that of managing parties, there seems indeed to be more occasion for employing this gift of the lower politicks, whenever the tide runs high against the court and ministry, which seldom happens under any tolerable administration, while the true interest of the nation is pursued. But, here in *England* (for I do not pretend to establish maxims of government in general) while the prince and ministry, the clergy, the majority of landed-men, and bulk of the people appear to have the same views and the same principles, it is not obvious to me, how those at the helm can have many opportunities of shewing their skill in mystery and refinement, besides what themselves think fit to create.

I have been assured by men long practised in business, that the secrets of court are much fewer than we generally suppose ; and I hold it for the greatest secret of court, that they are so : because the first springs of great events, like those of great rivers, are often so mean and so little, that in decency they ought to be hid : and therefore ministers are so wise to leave their proceedings to
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be accounted for by reasoners at a distance, who often mould them into systems, that do not only go down very well in the coffee-house, but are supplies for pamphlets in the present age, and may probably furnish materials for memoirs and histories in the next.

It is true indeed, that even those who are very near the court, and are supposed to have a large share in the management of publick matters, are apt to deduct wrong consequences by reasoning upon the causes and motives of those actions, wherein themselves are employed. A great minister puts you a case, and asks your opinion, but conceals an essential circumstance, upon which the whole weight of the matter turns; then he despiseth your understanding for counselling him no better, and concludes he ought to trust entirely to his own wisdom. Thus he grows to abound in secrets and reserves even towards those, with whom he ought to act in the greatest confidence and concert; and thus the world is brought to judge, that whatever be the issue and event, it was all foreseen, contrived, and brought to pass by some master-stroke of his politicks.

I could produce innumerable instances, from my own memory and observation, of events imputed to the profound skill and address of a minister, which in reality were either the meer effects of negligence, weakness, humour, passion, or pride, or at best, but the natural course of things left to themselves.

During this very session of parliament a most ingenious gentleman, who hath much credit with those in power, would needs have it, that in the late dissensions at court, which grew too high to be any longer a secret, the whole matter was carried with the utmost dexterity on one side, and with manifest ill conduct on the other. To prove this he made use of the most plausible topicks, drawn from the nature and disposition of the several persons concerned, as well as of her majesty; all which he knows as much of as any man: and gave me a detail of the whole

with such an appearance of probability, as committed to writing would pass for an admirable piece of secret history. Yet I am at the same time convinced by the strongest reasons, that the issue of those dissensions, as to the part they had in the court and house of lords, was partly owing to very different causes, and partly to the situation of affairs, from whence in that conjuncture they could not easily terminate otherwise than they did, whatever unhappy consequences they may have for the future.

In like manner I have heard a physician pronounce with great gravity, that he had cured so many patients of malignant fevers, and as many more of the small-pox; whereas in truth nine parts in ten of those who recovered, owed their lives to the strength of nature and a good constitution, while such a one happened to be their doctor.

But, while it is so difficult to learn the springs and motives of some facts, and so easy to forget the circumstances of others, it is no wonder they should be so grossly misrepresented to the publick by curious inquisitive heads, who proceed altogether upon conjectures, and in reasoning upon affairs of state are sure to be mistaken by searching too deep. And as I have known this to be the frequent error of many others, so I am sure it hath been perpetually mine, whenever I have attempted to discover the causes of political events by refinement and conjecture; which I must acknowledge hath very much abated my veneration for what they call *arcana imperii*; whereof I dare pronounce, that the fewer there are in any administration, it is just so much the better.

What I have hitherto said, hath by no means been intended to detract from the qualities requisite in those, who are trusted with the administration of publick affairs; on the contrary, I know no station of life, where great abilities and virtues of all kinds are so highly necessary, and where the want of any is so quickly or universally felt. A great minister hath no virtue for which the publick may not be the better, nor any defect by which the publick

lick is not certainly a sufferer. I have known more than once or twice within four years past, an omission, in appearance very small, prove almost fatal to a whole scheme, and very hardly retrieved. It is not always sufficient for the person at the helm, that he is intrepid in his nature, free from any tincture of avarice or corruption, and that he hath great natural and acquired abilities.

I never thought the reputation of much secrecy was a character of any advantage to a minister, because it put all other men upon their guard to be as secret as he, and was consequently the occasion that persons and things were always misrepresented to him: because likewise too great an affectation of secrecy is usually thought to be attended with those little intrigues and refinements, which among the vulgar denominate a man a great politician; but among others is apt, whether deservedly or no, to acquire the opinion of cunning: a talent, which differs as much from the true knowledge of government, as that of an attorney from an able lawyer. Neither indeed am I altogether convinced, that this habit of multiplying secrets may not be carried on so far as to stop that communication, which is necessary in some degree among all who have any considerable part in the management of publick affairs: because I have observed the inconveniencies arising from a want of love between those who were to give directions, to *have* been of as ill consequence, as any that could happen from the discovery of secrets. I suppose, when a building is to be erected, the model may be the contrivance only of one head; and it is sufficient that the under-workmen be ordered to cut stones into certain shapes, and place them in certain positions: but the several master-builders must have some general knowledge of the design, without which they can give no orders at all. And, indeed, I do not know a greater mark of an able minister, than that of rightly adapting the several faculties of men; nor is any thing more to be lamented than the impracticableness of doing
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this in any great degree under our present circumstances, while so many shut themselves out by adhering to a faction, and while the court is enslaved to the impatience of others, who desire to sell their vote, or their interest, as dear as they can. But whether this hath not been submitted to more than was necessary, whether it hath not been dangerous in the example, and pernicious in the practice, I will leave to the enquiry of those who can better determine.

It may be matter of no little admiration to consider in some lights the state of affairs among us for four years past. The queen finding herself and the majority of her kingdom grown weary of the avarice and insolence, the mistaken politicks, and destructive principles of her former ministers; calls to the service of the publick another set of men, who by confession of their enemies had equal abilities at least with their predecessors; whose interest made it necessary for them (although their inclinations had been otherwise) to act upon those maxims which were most agreeable to the constitution in church and state; whose birth and patrimonies gave them weight in the nation; and who (I speak of those who were to have the chief part in affairs) had long lived under the strictest bonds of friendship: with all these advantages supported by a vast majority of the landed interest, and the inferior clergy almost to a man, we have several times seen the present administration in the greatest distress, and very near the brink of ruin, together with the cause of the church and monarchy committed to their charge; neither doth it appear to me at the minute I am now writing, that their power or duration are upon any tolerable foot of security: which I do not so much impute to the address and industry of their enemies, as to some failures among themselves, which I think have been full as visible in their causes as their effects.

Nothing hath given me greater indignation than to behold a ministry, who came with the advantages I have represented, act-
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ing ever since upon the defensive in the house of lords with a majority on their side, and instead of calling others to account, as it was reasonably expected, mispending their time and losing many opportunities of doing good, because a struggling faction kept them continually in play. This courage among the adversaries of the court was inspired into them by various incidents, for every one of which I think the *ministers*, or, (if that was the case) the *minister* alone is to answer.

For, first, that race of politicians, who in the cant phrase are called the *whimsicals**, was never so numerous, or at least so active, as it hath been since the great change at court; many of those who pretended wholly to be in with the principles upon which her majesty and her new servants proceeded, either absenting themselves with the utmost indifference, in those conjunctures whereon the whole cause depended, or siding directly with the enemy.

I very well remember, when this ministry was not above a year old, there was a little murmuring among such as are called the higher Tories or churchmen, that quicker progress was not made in removing those of the discontented party out of employments. I remember likewise, the reasonings upon this matter were various, even among many who were allowed to know a good deal of the inside of the court; some supposed the queen was at first prevailed on to make that great change with no other view, than that of acting for the future upon a *moderating scheme* in order to reconcile both parties; and I believe there might possibly have been some grounds for this supposition. Others conceived the employments were left undisposed of, in order to keep alive the hopes of many more impatient candidates than ever could be gratified. This hath since been looked on as a very high

* Whimsicals, were Tories who had been eager for the conclusion of the peace till the treaties were perfected, then they could come up to no direct approbation; in the clamour raised about

the danger of the succession they joined the Whigs and declared directly against their party, and affected in most other points a most glorious neutrality. See *Bolin. Lett. to Wynd.* p. 48, 49.

high strain of politicks, and to have succeeded accordingly ; because it is the opinion of many, that the numerous pretenders to places would never have been kept in order, if all expectation had been cut off. Others were yet more refined ; and thought it neither wise nor safe wholly to extinguish all opposition from the other side ; because in the nature of things it was absolutely necessary that there should be parties in an *English* parliament ; and a faction already odious to the people might be suffered to continue with less danger, than any new one that could arise. To confirm this it was said, that the majority in the house of commons was too great on the side of the high-church, and began to form themselves into a body (by the name of the *October-club*) in order to put the ministry under subjection. Lastly, the danger of introducing too great a number of unexperienced men at once into office, was urged as an irrefragable reason for making changes by slow degrees. To discard an able officer from an employment, or part of a commission, where the revenue or trade were concerned, for no other reason but differing in some principles of government, might be of terrible consequence.

However, it is certain, that none of these excuses were able to pass among men, who argued only from the principles of general reason. For first, they looked upon all schemes of comprehension to be as visionary and impossible in the state, as in the church. Secondly, while the spirit raised by the tryal of dr. *Sacheverell* continued in motion, men were not so keen upon coming in themselves, as to see their enemies *out*, and deprived of all assistance to do mischief : and it is urged further, that this general ambition of hunting after places grew chiefly from seeing them so long undisposed of, and from too general an encouragement by promises to all, who were thought capable of doing either good or hurt. Thirdly, the fear of creating another party in case the present faction were wholly subdued, was in the opinion of plain men, and in regard to the situation of our affairs, too great a sacrifice

crifice of the nation's safety to the *genius* of politicks; considering how much was to be done, and how little time might probably be allowed. Besides, the division of a house of commons into *court* and *country* parties, which was the evil they seemed to apprehend, could never be dangerous to a good ministry, who had the true interest and constitution of their country at heart: as for the apprehension of too great a majority in the house of commons, it appeared to be so vain, that upon some points of importance the court was hardly able to procure one. And the *October-club*, which appeared so formidable at first to some politicians, proved in the sequel to be the chief support of those who suspected them. It was likewise very well known that the greatest part of those men, whom the former ministry left in possession of employments, were loudly charged with insufficiency or corruption, over and above their obnoxious tenets in religion and government; so that it would have been a matter of some difficulty to make a worse choice: besides, that plea for keeping men of factious principles in employment upon the score of their abilities, was thought to be extended a little too far, and construed to take in all employments whatsoever, although many of them required no more abilities than would serve to qualify a gentleman-usher at court: so that this last excuse for the very slow steps made in disarming the adversaries of the crown, was allowed indeed to have more plausibility, but less truth, than any of the former.

I do not here pretend to condemn the counsels or actions of the present ministry: their safety and interest are visibly united with those of the publick, they are persons of unquestionable abilities, altogether unsuspected of avarice or corruption, and have the advantage to be further recommended by the dread and hatred of the opposite faction. However, it is manifest that the zeal of their friends hath been cooling towards them for above two years past: they have been frequently deserted or distressed upon the most pressing occasions, and very near giving up in despair: their cha-

acters have been often treated with the utmost barbarity and injustice in both houses by scurrilous and enraged orators ; while their nearest friends, and even those who must have a share in their disgrace, never offered a word in their vindication.

When I examine with myself what occasions the ministry may have given for this coldness, inconstancy and discontent among their friends, I at the same time recollect the various conjectures, reasonings and suspicions, which have run so freely for three years past, concerning the designs of the court : I do not only mean such conjectures, as are born in a coffee-house, or invented by the malice of a party ; but also the conclusions (however mistaken) of wise and good men, whose quality and station fitted them to understand the reason of publick proceedings, and in whose power it lay to recommend or disgrace an administration to the people. I must therefore take the boldness to assert, that all these discontents, how ruinous soever they may prove in the consequences, have most unnecessarily arisen from the want of a due *communication* and *concert*. Every man must have a light sufficient for the length of the way he is appointed to go : there is a degree of confidence due to all stations ; and a petty constable will neither act chearfully or wisely without that share of it which properly belongs to him : although the main spring in a watch be out of sight, there is an intermediate communication between it and the smallest wheel, or else no useful motion could be performed. This reserved mysterious way of acting upon points, where there appeared not the least occasion for it, and towards persons, who at least, in right of their posts, expected a more open treatment, was imputed to some hidden design, which every man conjectured to be the very thing he was most afraid of. Those who professed the height of what is called the church principle, suspected, that a *comprehension* was intended, wherein the *moderate* men on both sides might be equally employed. Others went farther, and dreaded such a comprehension, as directly tended to bring the old exploded

exploded principles and persons once more into play. Again, some affected to be uneasy about the succession, and seemed to think there was a view of introducing that person, whatever he is, who pretends to claim the crown by inheritance. Others, especially of late, surmised on the contrary, that the demands of the house of *Hanover* were industriously fomented by some in power, without the privity of the — or —. Now, although these accusations were too inconsistent to be all of them true, yet they were maliciously suffered to pass, and thereby took off much of that popularity, which those at the helm stood in need of to support them under the difficulties of a long perplexing negociation, a daily addition of publick debts, and an exhausted treasury.

But the effects of this mystical manner of proceeding did not end here: for, the late dissensions between the great men at court (which have been, for some time past, the publick entertainment of every coffee-house) are said to have arisen from the same fountain; while on one side very great reserve, and certainly very great resentment on the other*, if we may believe general report (for I pretend to know no farther) have enflamed animosities to such a height, as to make all reconciliation impracticable. Supposing this to be true, it may serve for a great lesson of humiliation to mankind, to behold the habits and passions of men otherwise highly accomplished, triumphing over interest, friendship, honour, and their own personal safety, as well as that of their country, and probably of a most gracious princess who hath entrusted it to them. A ship's crew quarreling in a storm, or while their enemies are within gun-shot, is but a faint idea of this fatal infatuation: of which, although it be hard to say enough, some people may think perhaps I have already said too much.

Since this unhappy incident, the desertion of friends and loss of reputation have been so great, that I do not see how the mini-

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* Lord *Oxford's* reserve was the cause of *Bolingbroke's* resentment.

sters could have continued many weeks in their stations, if their opposers of all kinds had agreed about the methods by which they should be ruined: and their preservation hitherto seems to resemble his, who had two poisons given him together of contrary operations.

It may seem very impertinent in one of my level to point out to those, who sit at the helm, what course they ought to steer. I know enough of courts to be sensible, how mean an opinion great ministers have of most men's understanding; to a degree, that in any other science would be called the grossest pedantry. However, unless I offer my sentiments in this point, all I have hitherto said, will be to no purpose.

The general wishes and desires of a people are perhaps more obvious to other men, than to ministers of state. There are two points of the highest importance, wherein a very great majority of the kingdom appear perfectly hearty and unanimous. First, that the church of *England* should be preserved entire in all her rights, powers and privileges; all doctrines relating to government discouraged, which she condemns; all schisms, sects and heresies discountenanced and kept under due subjection, as far as consists with the lenity of our constitution; her open enemies (among whom I include at least dissenters of all denominations) not trusted with the smallest degree of civil or military power; and her secret adversaries under the names of whigs, low-church, republicans, moderation-men and the like, receive no marks of favour from the crown, but what they should deserve by a sincere reformation.

Had this point been steadily pursued in all its parts, for three years past, and asserted as the avowed resolution of the court, there must probably have been an end of faction, which hath been able ever since with so much vigour to disturb and insult the administration. I know very well, that some refiners pretend to argue for the usefulness of parties in such a government as ours: I have said something of this already, and have heard a great many idle
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wife topicks upon the subject. But I shall not argue that matter at present: I suppose, if a man thinks it necessary to *play* with a *serpent*, he will chuse one of a kind that is least mischievous; otherwise, although it appears to be crushed, it may have life enough to sting him to death. So, I think it is not safe tampering with the present faction, at least in this juncture: first, because their principles and practices have been already very dangerous to the constitution in church and state: secondly, because they are highly irritated with the loss of their power, full of venom and vengeance, and prepared to execute every thing that rage or malice can suggest: but principally, because they have prevailed by misrepresentations and other artifices to make the successor look upon them as the only persons he can trust: upon which account they cannot be too soon, or too much disabled: neither will *England* ever be safe from the attempts of this wicked confederacy, until their strength and interest shall be so far reduced, that for the future it shall not be in the power of the crown, although in conjunction with any rich and factious body of men, to chuse an ill majority in the house of commons.

One step very necessary to this great work will be to regulate the army, and chiefly those troops which in their turns have the care of her majesty's person; who are most of them fitter to guard a prince under an *high court of justice*, than seated on the throne. The peculiar hand of providence hath hitherto preserved her majesty, encompassed, whether sleeping or travelling, by her enemies: but since religion teacheth us, that providence ought not to be tempted, it is ill-venturing to trust that precious life any longer to those, who by their publick behaviour and discourse discover their impatience to see it at an end; that they may have liberty to be the instruments of glutting at once the revenge of their patrons and their own. It should be well remembered, what a satisfaction these gentlemen (after the example of their betters) were so sanguine to express upon the queen's last illness at *Windsor*, and what threatenings

threatenings they used of refusing to obey their general, in case that illness had proved fatal. Nor do I think it a want of charity to suspect, that in such an evil day an enraged faction would be highly pleased with the power of the sword, and with great connivance leave it so long unsheathed, until they were got rid of their most formidable adversaries. In the mean time it must be a very melancholy prospect, that whenever it shall please God to visit us with this calamity, those who are paid to be defenders of the civil power, will stand ready for any acts of violence, that a *Junta* composed of the greatest enemies to the constitution shall think fit to enjoin them.

The other point of great importance is the security of the protestant succession in the house of *Hanover*: not from any partiality to that illustrious house, further than as it hath had the honour to mingle with the blood royal of *England*, and is the nearest branch of our regal line reformed from popery. This point hath one advantage over the former, that both parties profess to desire the same blessing for posterity, but differ about the means of securing it. From whence it hath come to pass, that the protestant succession, in appearance the desire of the whole nation, hath proved the greatest topick of slander, jealousy, suspicion and discontent.

I have been so curious to ask several acquaintance among the opposite party, whether they, or their leaders, did really suspect there had been ever any design in the ministry to weaken the succession in favour of the *pretender*, or of any other person whatsoever. Some of them freely answered in the negative: others were of the same opinion, but added, they did not know what might be done in time, and upon farther provocations: others again seemed to believe the affirmative, but could never produce any plausible grounds for their belief. I have likewise been assured by a person of some consequence, that during a very near and constant familiarity with the great men at court for four years past, he never could observe, even in those hours of conversation where there is
usually

usually least restraint, that one word ever passed among them to shew a dislike to the present settlement; although they would sometimes lament, that the false representations of their's and the kingdom's enemies had made some impressions in the mind of the successor. As to my own circle of acquaintance I can safely affirm, that excepting those who are *nonjurors* by profession, I have not met with above two persons who appeared to have any scruples concerning the present limitation of the crown. I therefore think it may very impartially be pronounced, that the number of those, who wish to see the son of the abdicated prince upon the throne, is altogether inconsiderable. And further, I believe it will be found, that there are none who so much dread any attempt he shall make for the recovery of his imagined rights, as the *Roman-Catholicks of England*; who love their freedom and properties too well to desire his entrance by a *French* army, and a field of blood; who must continue upon the same foot if he changeth his religion, and must expect to be the first and greatest sufferers if he should happen to fail.

As to the person of this nominal prince, he lies under all manner of disadvantages: the vulgar imagine him to have been a child imposed upon the nation by the fraudulent zeal of his parents and their bigotted counsellors; who took special care, against all the rules of common policy, to educate him in their hateful superstition, sucked in with his milk and confirmed in his manhood, too strong to be now shaken by mr. *Lesley**; and a counterfeit conversion will be too gross to pass upon the kingdom, after what we have seen and suffered from the like practice in his father. He is likewise said to be of weak intellectuals, and an unsound constitution: he was treated contemptibly enough by the young princes of *France*, even during the war; is now wholly neglected by that crown, and driven to live in exile upon a small exhibition: he is utterly

* *Lesley* was a nonjuring clergyman, who wrote a letter from *Barleduc* in *Lorrain*, the place of the pretender's residence, addressed to a member of parliament in *London*, in praise and on behalf of his prince. The letter was printed and publicly handed about in *London*.

utterly unknown in *England*, which he left in the cradle: his father's friends are most of them dead, the rest antiquated or poor. Six and twenty years have almost past since the *revolution*, and the bulk of those who are now most in action either at court, in parliament, or publick offices, were then boys at school or the universities, and look upon that great change to have happened during a period of time for which they are not accountable. The logick of the highest tories is now, that this was the establishment they found, as soon as they arrived to a capacity of judging; that they had no hand in turning out the late king, and therefore have no crime to answer for, if it were any: that the inheritance to the crown is fixed in pursuance of laws made ever since their remembrance, by which all papists are excluded, and they have no other rule to go by: that they will no more dispute king *William* the *third's* title, than king *William* the *first's*; since they must have recourse to history for both: that they have been instructed in the doctrines of passive obedience, non-resistance, and hereditary right, and find them all necessary for preserving the present establishment in church and state and for continuing the succession in the house of *Hanover*, and must in their own opinion renounce all those doctrines by setting up any other title to the crown. This, I say, seems to be the political creed of all the high-principled men I have for some time met with of forty years old and under; which although I do not pretend to justify in every part, yet I am sure it sets the protestant succession upon a much firmer foundation, than all the indigested schemes of those who profess to act upon what they call *revolution-principles*.

Neither should it perhaps be soon forgotten, that during the greatest licentiousness of the press, while the sacred character of the queen was every day insulted in factious papers and ballads, not the least reflecting insinuation ever appeared against the *Hanover* family, whatever occasion was offered to intemperate pens by the rashness or indiscretion of one or two ministers from thence.

From

From all these considerations I must therefore lay it down as an uncontestable truth, that the succession to these kingdoms in the illustrious house of *Hanover* is as firmly secured as the nature of the thing can possibly admit; by the oaths of all those who are entrusted with any office, by the very principles of those who are termed the *high-church*, by the general inclinations of the people, by the insignificance of that person who claims it from inheritance, and the little assistance he can expect either from princes abroad or adherents at home.

However, since the virulent opposers of the queen and her administration have so far prevailed by their emissaries at the court of *Hanover*, and by their practices upon one or two ignorant, unmannerly *messengers* from thence, as to make the *elector* desire some farther security, and send over a *memorial* here to that end: the great question is how to give reasonable satisfaction to his highness, and (what is infinitely of greater consequence) at the same time consult the honour and safety of the queen, whose quiet *possession* is of much more consequence to us of the present age, than his *reversion*. The substance of his *memorial*, if I retain it right, is to desire that some one of his family might live in *England*, with such a maintenance as is usual to those of the royal blood, and that certain *titles* should be conferred upon the rest according to antient custom. The *memorial* doth not specify which of the family should be invited to reside here; and if it had, I believe however, her majesty would have looked upon it as a circumstance left to her own choice.

But, as all this is most manifestly unnecessary in itself, and only in compliance with the mistaken doubts of a presumptive heir; so the nation would (to speak in the language of Mr. *Steel*) EXPECT, that her majesty should be made perfectly easy from that side for the future; no more to be alarmed with apprehensions of *visits*, or *demands of writs*, where * she hath not thought fit to give any *invitation*. The nation would likewise expect, that there should be an end of all private commerce between that court and the leaders

* Baron *Schutz*, envoy extraordinary from the elector of *Hanover*, demanded a *writ* for the electoral prince to sit in the house of peers as duke of *Cambridge*, and it was expected that his highness would have made a visit to the court of *London*.

of a party here ; and, that his electoral *highness* should *declare* himself entirely satisfied with all her majesty's proceedings, her treaties of peace and commerce, her alliances abroad, her choice of ministers at home, and particularly in her most gracious condescensions to his request : that he would upon all proper occasions, and in the most publick manner, discover his utter dislike of factious persons and principles, but especially of that party, which under the pretence or shelter of his protection hath so long disquieted the kingdom : and lastly, that he would acknowledge the goodness of the queen, and justice of the nation, in so fully securing the succession to his family.

It is indeed a problem which I could never comprehend, why the court of *Hanover*, who have all along thought themselves so perfectly secure in the affections, the principles and the professions of the *low-church* party, should not have endeavoured, according to the usual politicks of princes, to gain over those who were represented as their enemies ; since these supposed enemies had made so many advances, were in possession of all the power, had framed the very settlement to which that illustrious family owes its claim ; had all of them abjured the pretender ; were now employed in the great offices of state, and composed a majority in both houses of parliament. Not to mention, that the queen herself, with the bulk of the landed gentry and commonalty throughout the kingdom, were of the number. This one would think might be a strength sufficient not only to *obstruct* but to *bestow* a succession : and since the presumed heir could not but be perfectly secure of the other party, whose greatest avowed grievance was the pretended danger of his future rights ; it might therefore surely have been worth his while to have made at least one step towards cultivating a fair correspondence with the power in possession. Neither could those, who are called his friends, have blamed him, or with the least decency enter into any engagements for defeating his title.

But why may not the reasons of this proceeding in the *elector* be directly contrary to what is commonly imagined ? Methinks I could endeavour to believe, that his highness is thoroughly acquainted
with

with both parties ; is convinced, that no true member of the church of *England* can easily be shaken in his principles of loyalty, or forget the obligation of an oath, by any provocation. That *these* are therefore the people he intends to rely upon, and keeps only fair with the *others* from a *true* notion he hath of their doctrines, which prompt them to forget their duty upon every motive of interest or ambition. If this conjecture be right, his highness cannot sure but entertain a very high esteem of such ministers, who continue to act under the dread and appearance of a successor's utmost displeasure, and the threats of an enraged faction, whom he is supposed alone to favour, and to be guided entirely in his judgment of *British* affairs and persons by their opinions.

But to return from this digression : the presence of that infant prince * among us could not, I think, in any sort be inconsistent with the safety of the queen ; he would be in no danger of being corrupted in his principles, or exposed in his person by vicious companions ; he could be at the head of no factious clubs and cabals, nor be attended by a hired rabble, which his flatterers might represent as popularity. He would have none of that impatience which the frailty of human nature gives to expecting heirs. There would be no pretence for men to make their court by affecting *German* modes and *refinements* in dress or behaviour : nor would there be an occasion of insinuating to him, how much more his levee was frequented, than the anti-chambers of St. *James's*. Add to all this, the advantages of being educated in our religion, laws, language, manners, nature of the government, each so very different from those he would leave behind. By which likewise he might be highly useful to his father, if that prince should happen to survive her majesty.

The late king *William*, who after his marriage with the lady *Mary* of *England*, could have no probable expectation of the crown, and very little even of being a queen's husband (the duke of *York* having a young wife) was no stranger to our language or manners, and went often to the chapel of his princess ; which I observe the

* The infant prince was the son of the electoral prince of *Hanover*, who might be chosen to reside here in consequence of the memorial. See p. 217.

rather, because I could heartily wish the like disposition were in another court, and because it may be disagreeable to a prince to take up new doctrines on a sudden, or speak to his subjects by an interpreter.

An ill-natured or inquisitive man may still, perhaps, desire to press the question further by asking, what is to be done, in case it should so happen, that this malevolent working party at home hath credit enough with the court of *Hanover* to continue the suspicion, jealousy, and uneasiness there against the queen and her ministry; to make such demands be still insisted on, as are by no means thought proper to be complied with; and in the mean time to stand at arm's length with her majesty, and in close conjunction with those who oppose her.

I take the answer to be easy: in all contests the safest way is to put those, we dispute with, as much *in the wrong* as we can. When her majesty shall have offered such or the like concessions as I have above mentioned, in order to remove those scruples artificially raised in the mind of the expectant heir, and to divide him from that faction by which he is supposed to have been misled; she hath done as much as any prince can do, and more than any other would probably do in her case; and will be justified before God and man, whatever be the event. The equitable part of those, who now side against the court, will probably be more temperate; and, if a due dispatch be made in placing the civil and military power in the hands of such as wish well to the constitution, it cannot be any way for the quiet or interest of a successor to gratify so small a faction, as will probably then remain, at the expence of a much more numerous and considerable part of his subjects. Neither do I see how the principles of such a party, either in religion or government, will prove very agreeable, because I think *Luther* and *Calvin* seem to have differed as much as any two among the reformers: and, because a *German* prince will probably be suspicious of those, who think they can never depress the prerogative enough.

But supposing, once for all, as far as possible, that the *elector* should utterly refuse to be upon any terms of confidence with the present

present ministry, and all others of their principles, as enemies to him and the succession; nor easy with the queen herself: but upon such conditions as will not be thought *consistent with her safety and honour*; and continue to place all his hopes and trust in the discontented party. I think it were humbly to be wished, that whenever the succession shall take place, the alterations intended by the new prince should be made by *himself*, and not by his *deputies*: because I am of opinion, that the clause empowering the successor to appoint a *latent, unlimited* number, additional to the seven *regents* named in the *act*, went upon a supposition, that the *secret committee* would be of such, whose enmity and contrary principles disposed them to confound the rest. King *William*, whose title was much more controverted than that of her majesty's successor can ever probably be, did for several years leave the administration of the kingdom in the hands of lords justices, during the height of a war, and while the abdicated prince himself was frequently attempting an invasion: from whence one might imagine, that the regents appointed by parliament upon the demise of the crown would be able to keep the peace during an absence of a *few* weeks without any *colleagues*. However, I am pretty confident that the only reason, why a power was given of chusing *dormant* viceroys, was to take away all pretence of a necessity to invite over *any* of the family here, during her majesty's life. So that I do not well apprehend what arguments the *elector* can use to insist upon *both*.

To conclude; the only way of securing the constitution in church and state, and consequently this very protestant succession itself, will be by lessening the power of our domestic adversaries as much as can possibly consist with the lenity of our government; and, if this be not speedily done, it will be easy to point where the nation is to fix the blame: for we are well assured, that since the account her majesty received of the cabals, the triumphs, the insolent behaviour of the whole faction during her late illness at *Windsor*, she hath been as willing to see them deprived of all power to do mischief, as any of her most zealous and loyal subjects can desire.

THOUGHTS

T H O U G H T S

O N

V A R I O U S S U B J E C T S.

WE have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one-another.

Reflect on things past, as wars, negociations, factions, *etc.* we enter so little into those interests, that we wonder how men could possibly be so busy and concerned for things so transitory; look on the present times, we find the same humour, yet wonder not at all.

A wise man endeavours, by considering all circumstances, to make conjectures, and form conclusions; but the smallest accident intervening (and in the course of affairs it is impossible to foresee all) does often produce such turns and changes, that at last he is just as much in doubt of events as the most ignorant and unexperienced person.

Positiveness is a good quality for preachers and orators, because he that would obtrude his thoughts and reasons upon a multitude, will convince others the more, as he appears convinced himself.

How is it possible to expect that mankind will take advice, when they will not so much as take warning?

I forget whether advice be among the lost things, which *Aristo* says are to be found in the moon; that and time ought to have been there.

No preacher is listened to but time, which gives us the same train and turn of thought, that elder people have tried in vain to put into our heads before.

When we desire or solicit any thing, our minds run wholly on the good side or circumstances of it; when it is obtained, our minds run wholly on the bad ones.

In a *glass-house* the workmen often fling in a small quantity of fresh coals, which seems to disturb the fire, but very much enliven

vens it. This seems to allude to a gentle stirring of the passions, that the mind may not languish.

Religion seems to have grown an infant with age, and requires miracles to nurse it, as it had in its infancy.

All fits of pleasure are balanced by an equal degree of pain or languor ; it is like spending this year part of the next year's revenue.

The latter part of a wise man's life is taken up in curing the follies, prejudices, and false opinions he had contracted in the former.

Would a writer know how to behave himself with relation to posterity, let him consider in old books what he finds that he is glad to know, and what omissions he most laments.

Whatever the poets pretend, it is plain they give immortality to none but themselves : it is *Homer* and *Virgil* we reverence and admire, not *Achilles* or *Æneas*. With historians it is quite the contrary ; our thoughts are taken up with the actions, persons, and events we read, and we little regard the authors.

When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign, that the dunces are all in confederacy against him.

Men who possess all the advantages of life, are in a state where there are many accidents to disorder and discompose, but few to please them.

It is unwise to punish cowards with ignominy ; for if they had regarded that, they would not have been cowards : death is their proper punishment, because they fear it most.

The greatest inventions were produced in the times of ignorance ; as the use of the *compass*, *gunpowder*, and *printing* ; and by the dullest nation, as the *Germans*.

One argument to prove that the common relations of *ghosts* and *spectres* are generally false, may be drawn from the opinion held, that spirits are never seen by more than one person at a time ; that is to say, it seldom happens to above one person in a company to be possessed with any high degree of spleen or melancholy.

I am apt to think, that in the day of judgment there will be small allowance given to the wise for their want of morals, and to
the

the ignorant for their want of faith, because both are without excuse. This renders the advantages equal of ignorance and knowledge. But some scruples in the wise, and some vices in the ignorant, will perhaps be forgiven upon the strength of temptation to each.

The value of several circumstances in story lessens very much by distance of time, though some minute circumstances are very valuable; and it requires great judgment in a writer to distinguish.

It is grown a word of course for writers to say, This critical age, as divines say, This sinful age.

It is pleasant to observe how free the present age is in laying taxes on the next: *Future ages shall talk of this; this shall be famous to all posterity*: whereas their time and thoughts will be taken up about present things, as ours are now.

The *camelion*, who is said to feed upon nothing but air, hath of all animals the nimblest tongue.

When a man is made a spiritual peer he loses his fir-name; when a temporal, his christian-name.

It is in disputes as in armies, where the weaker side sets up false lights, and makes a great noise, to make the enemy believe them more numerous and strong than they really are.

Some men, under the notions of weeding out prejudices, eradicate virtue, honesty, and religion.

In all well-instituted commonwealths, care has been taken to limit mens possessions; which is done for many reasons, and among the rest, for one which perhaps is not often considered, that when bounds are set to mens desires, after they have acquired as much as the laws will permit them, their private interest is at an end, and they have nothing to do but to take care of the publick.

There are but three ways for a man to revenge himself of the censure of the world; to despise it, to return the like, or to endeavour to live so as to avoid it: the first of these is usually pretended, the last is almost impossible, the universal practice is for the second.

Herodotus tells us, that in cold countries beasts very seldom have
horns,

horns, but in hot they have very large ones. This might bear a pleasant application.

I never heard a finer piece of satire against *lawyers*, than that of *astrologers*, when they pretend by rules of art to tell when a suit will end, and whether to the advantage of the plaintiff or defendant; thus making the matter depend entirely upon the influence of the stars, without the least regard to the merits of the cause.

The expression in *Apocrypha* about *Tobit* and his dog following him I have often heard ridiculed, yet *Homer* has the same words of *Telemachus* more than once; and *Virgil* says something like it of *Evander*. And I take the book of *Tobit* to be partly poetical.

I have known some men possessed of good qualities, which were very serviceable to others, but useless to themselves; like a sun-dial on the front of a house, to inform the neighbours and passengers, but not the owner within.

If a man would register all his opinions upon love, politicks, religion, learning, *etc.* beginning from his youth and so go on to old age, what a bundle of inconsistencies and contradictions would appear at last?

What they do in heaven we are ignorant of; what they do not we are told expressly, that they neither marry, nor are given in marriage.

When a man observes the choice of ladies now-a-days in the dispensing of their favours, can he forbear paying some veneration to the memory of those mares mentioned by *Xenophon**, who, while their manes were on, that is, while they were in their beauty, would never admit the embraces of an ass.

It is a miserable thing to live in suspense; it is the life of a spider.

Vive quidem, pende tamen, improba, dixit. Ovid *Metam.*

The stoical scheme of supplying our wants by lopping off our desires, is like cutting off our feet when we want shoes.

* *De Re Equestri.*

Physicians ought not to give their judgment of religion, for the same reason that butchers are not admitted to be jurors upon life and death.

The reason, why so few marriages are happy, is because young ladies spend their time in making nets, not in making cages.

If a man will observe as he walks the streets, I believe he will find the merriest countenances in mourning-coaches.

Nothing more unqualifies a man to act with prudence, than a misfortune that is attended with shame and guilt.

The power of fortune is confessed only by the miserable; for the happy impute all their success to prudence or merit.

Ambition often puts men upon doing the meanest offices; so climbing is performed in the same posture with creeping.

Ill company is like a dog, who dirties those most whom he loves best.

Censure is the tax a man pays to the publick for being eminent.

Although men are accused for not knowing their own weakness, yet perhaps as few know their own strength. It is in men as in foils, where sometimes there is a vein of gold which the owner knows not of.

Satire is reckoned the easiest of all wit; but I take it to be otherwise in very bad times: for it is as hard to satirize well a man of distinguished vices, as to praise well a man of distinguished virtues. It is easy enough to do either to people of moderate characters.

Invention is the talent of youth, and judgment of age; so that our judgment grows harder to please, when we have fewer things to offer it: this goes through the whole commerce of life. When we are old, our friends find it difficult to please us, and are less concerned whether we be pleased or no.

No wise man ever wished to be younger.

An idle reason lessens the weight of the good ones you gave before.

The motives of the best actions will not bear too strict an enquiry.

quiry. It is allowed, that the cause of most actions, good or bad, may be resolved into the love of ourselves; but the self-love of some men inclines them to please others; and the self-love of others is wholly employed in pleasing themselves. This makes the great distinction between virtue and vice. Religion is the best motive of all actions, yet religion is allowed to be the highest instance of self-love.

When the world has once begun to use us ill, it afterwards continues the same treatment with less scruple or ceremony, as men do to a whore.

Old men view best at a distance with the eyes of their understanding as well as with those of nature.

Some people take more care to hide their wisdom than their folly.

Arbitrary power is the natural object of temptation to a prince, as wine or women to a young fellow, or a bribe to a judge, or avarice to old age, or vanity to a woman.

Anthony Henly's farmer dying of an *asthma*, said, well, if I can get this breath once *out*, I'll take care it shall never get *in* again.

The humour of exploding many things under the name of trifles, fopperies, and only imaginary goods, is a very false proof either of wisdom or magnanimity, and a great check to virtuous actions. For instance, with regard to fame: there is in most people a reluctance and unwillingness to be forgotten. We observe even among the vulgar, how fond they are to have an inscription over their grave. It requires but little philosophy to discover and observe that there is no intrinsic value in all this; however, if it be founded in our nature, as an incitement to virtue, it ought not to be ridiculed.

Complaint is the largest tribute heaven receives, and the sincerest part of our devotion.

The common fluency of speech in many men, and most women, is owing to a scarcity of matter, and a scarcity of words; for whoever is a master of language, and hath a mind full of ideas, will

be apt in speaking to hesitate upon the choice of both; whereas common speakers have only one set of ideas, and one set of words to cloath them in; and these are always ready at the mouth: so people come faster out of a church when it is almost empty, than when a crowd is at the door.

Few are qualified to *shine* in company; but it is in most mens power to be agreeable. The reason therefore, why conversation runs so low at present, is not the defect of understanding, but pride, vanity, ill-nature, affectation, singularity, positiveness, or some other vice, the effect of a wrong education.

To be vain is rather a mark of humility than pride. Vain men delight in telling what honours have been done them, what great company they have kept, and the like, by which they plainly confess that these honours were more than their due, and such as their friends would not believe if they had not been told: whereas a man truly proud thinks the greatest honours below his merit, and consequently scorns to boast. I therefore deliver it as a maxim, that whoever desires the character of a proud man, ought to conceal his vanity.

Law, in a free country, is, or ought to be, the determination of the majority of those who have property in land.

One argument used to the disadvantage of providence, I take to be a very strong one in its defence. It is objected, that storms and tempests, unfruitful seasons, serpents, spiders, flies, and other noxious or troublesome animals, with many more instances of the like kind, discover an imperfection in nature, because human life would be much easier without them; but the design of providence may clearly be perceived in this proceeding. The motions of the sun and moon; in short, the whole system of the universe, as far as philosophers have been able to discover and observe, are in the utmost degree of regularity and perfection; but wherever God hath left to man the power of interposing a remedy by thought or labour, there he hath placed things in a state of imperfection on purpose
to

to stir up human industry, without which life would stagnate, or indeed rather could not subsist at all: *Curis accuunt mortalia corda.*

Praise is the daughter of present power.

How inconsistent is man with himself?

I have known several persons of great fame for wisdom in public affairs and councils governed by foolish servants.

I have known great ministers, distinguished for wit and learning, who preferred none but dunces.

I have known men of great valour cowards to their wives.

I have known men of the greatest cunning perpetually cheated.

I knew three great ministers, who could exactly compute and settle the accompts of a kingdom, but were wholly ignorant of their own œconomy.

The preaching of divines helps to preserve well-inclined men in the course of virtue, but seldom or never reclaims the vicious.

Princes usually make wiser choices than the servants whom they trust for the disposal of places: I have known a prince, more than once, chuse an able minister; but I never observed that minister to use his credit in the disposal of an employment to a person whom he thought the fittest for it. One of the greatest in this age owned and excused the matter from the violence of parties, and the unreasonableness of friends.

Small causes are sufficient to make a man uneasy, when great ones are not in the way: for want of a *block* he will stumble at a *straw*.

Dignity, high station, or great riches, are in some sort necessary to old men, in order to keep the younger at a distance, who are otherwise too apt to insult them upon the score of their age.

Every man desires to live long; but no man would be old.

Love of flattery in most men proceeds from the mean opinion they have of themselves; in women from the contrary.

If books and laws continue to increase as they have done for

fifty years past, I am in some concern for future ages, how any man will be learned, or any man a lawyer.

Kings are commonly said to have *long hands*; I wish they had as *long ears*.

Princes in their infancy, childhood, and youth, are said to discover prodigious parts and wit, to speak things that surprize and astonish: strange, so many hopeful princes, and so many shameful kings! If they happen to die young, they would have been prodigies of wisdom and virtue: if they live, they are often prodigies indeed, but of another sort.

Politicks, as the word is commonly understood, are nothing but corruptions, and consequently of no use to a good king, or a good ministry; for which reason courts are so over-run with politicks.

Silenus, the foster-father of *Bacchus*, is always carried by an *ass*, and has horns on his head. The moral is, that drunkards are led by fools, and have a great chance to be cuckolds.

Venus, a beautiful good-natured lady, was the goddess of love; *Juno*, a terrible shrew, the goddess of marriage: and they were always mortal enemies.

Those who are against religion, must needs be fools; and therefore we read that, of all animals, God refused the *first-born* of an *ass*.

A very little wit is valued in a woman, as we are pleased with a few words spoken plain by a parrot.

A nice man is a man of nasty ideas.

Apollo was held the God of physick, and sender of diseases. Both were originally the same trade, and still continue.

Old men and comets have been revered for the same reason; their long beards, and pretences to foretel events.

A person was asked at court, what he thought of an ambassador, and his train, who were all embroidery and lace, full of bows, cringes, and gestures; he said, it was *Solomon's* importation, *Gold and apes*.

There

There is a story in *Pausanias* of a plot for betraying of a city discovered by the braying of an *ass*: the cackling of *geese* saved the *capitol*, and *Catiline's* conspiracy was discovered by a *whore*. These are the only three animals, as far as I remember, famous in history as *evidences* and *informers*.

Most sorts of diversion in men, children, and other animals, are an imitation of fighting.

Augustus meeting an *ass* with a *lucky name* foretold himself good fortune. I meet many asses, but none of them have lucky names.

If a man makes me keep my distance, the comfort is, he keeps his at the same time.

Who can deny that all men are violent lovers of truth, when we see them so positive in their errors, which they will maintain out of their zeal to truth, although they contradict themselves every day of their lives?

That was excellently observed, say I, when I read a passage in an author, where his opinion agrees with mine. When we differ, there I pronounce him to be *mistaken*.

Very few men, properly speaking, live at present, but are providing to live another time.

As universal a practice as lying is, and as easy one as it seems, I do not remember to have heard three good lyes in all my conversation, even from those who were most celebrated in that faculty.

F I N I S.

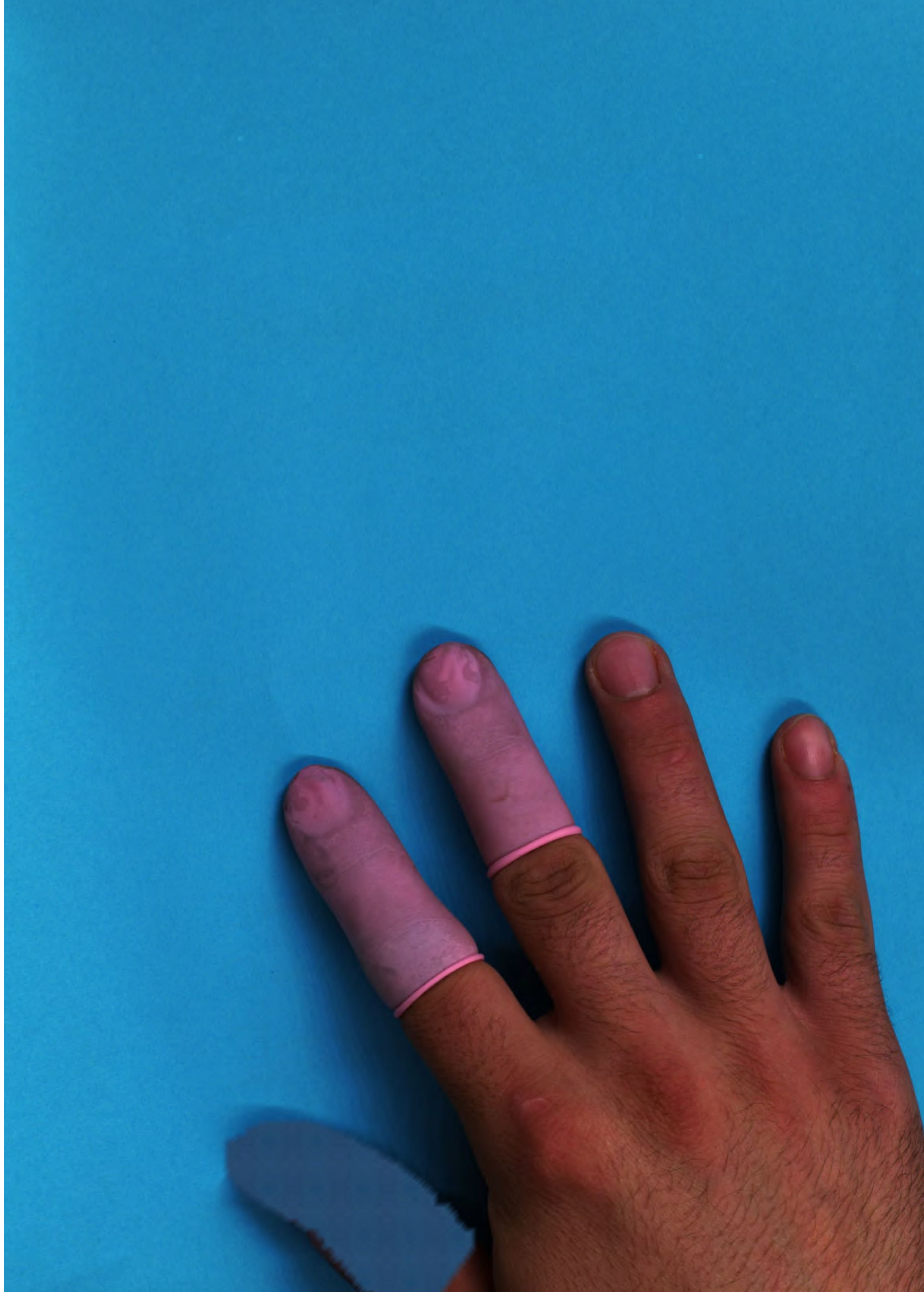
THOUGHTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS

There is a story in the history of a poor old man, who was very
diligent in his business, and was very much respected by his
neighbors. He was a very good man, and was very much
loved by his family. He was a very good man, and was very
much respected by his neighbors. He was a very good man, and
was very much loved by his family.

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neighbors. He was a very good man, and was very much loved
by his family. He was a very good man, and was very much
respected by his neighbors. He was a very good man, and was
very much loved by his family.

Who can deny that all men are mortal? It is a fact, and
it is a fact that all men are mortal. It is a fact, and it is a
fact that all men are mortal. It is a fact, and it is a fact that
all men are mortal.

It is a fact, and it is a fact that all men are mortal. It is
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Swift, Jonathan, 1667-1745

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